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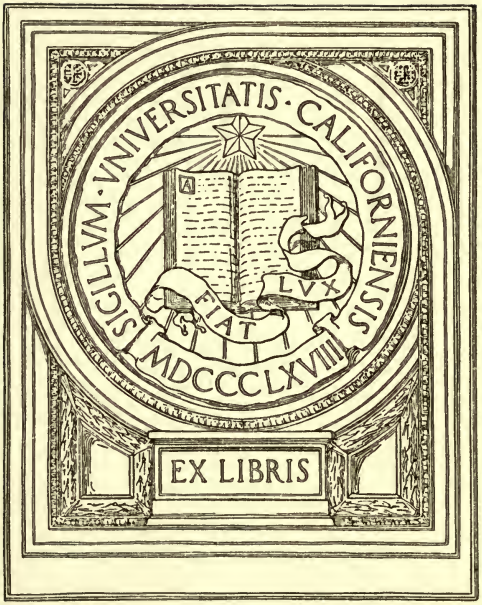
THE REFLECTIONS OF A LONELY MAN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THE REFLECTIONS *of a* LONELY MAN

St. Louis.

Irene M. Douglas
East San Pedro
Cal.

June - 1910.

THE REFLECTIONS OF A LONELY MAN

By A. C. M.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

SECOND EDITION

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG & CO.
1903

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1903

Published April 18, 1903
Second edition published July 1, 1903

UNIVERSITY PRESS · JOHN WILSON
AND SON · CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.

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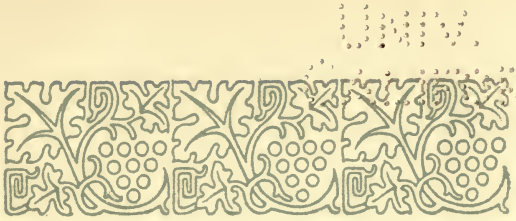

I

PRELIMINARY MUSINGS

WHEN a man has just been well fed, and sits in the easy comfort of his smoking-jacket and slippers, he likes to toy a while with thought before he settles down to the serious business of thinking, as the wind of a late November afternoon eddies in the fence-corners and amorously dallies with the leaves, before it forms itself into a steady gale, which, let us hope, will not blow all the leaves away. So the Lonely Man sits gazing into his gas fire, while his fancy playfully eddies in the various nooks and fence-corners of creation; and, from gazing into the fire, he presently falls to musing about it.

A wood fire might be more cheerful, but gas is certainly more convenient than wood, and this is an age of convenient things; but the Lonely Man reflects, as he gazes into the quivering redness of the burning gas, that the increasing convenience of things has been attained at some sacrifice of cheerfulness and beauty. The very existence of a fireplace in the presence of the steam heat and the electric lights in this room is a tacit admission of the loss, and a silent protest against it. The fireplace is a tribute to the cheerful picturesqueness of an earlier age and a cruder civilization. Then the fireplace was cheerful only because it was necessary; now it is necessary only because it is cheerful.

On the whole, the burning gas is not a bad substitute for the blazing logs of earlier times. There may be less poetry in turning a thumbscrew than there is in poking a burning log, but there is also less danger of soiling one's fingers and burning holes in

the carpet. It may be less interesting to apply a match to the ragged surface of asbestos than it is to construct a stratified mass of combustibles and then guess whether the tiny flame in the shavings at the bottom will ever reach the logs at the top, but it is certainly less frequently disappointing.

There is no noisy crackling in this fireplace; there are no showers of sparks; there is no gradual dying out of the flame to remind one of the decay of one's own ambitions; and there are no ashes left to smoulder and grow cold in the grate and remind one of the skeletons of one's dead hopes. This fire starts quickly and burns with a constancy which surpasses that of human friendship, till, at the will of the Lonely Man, it makes its sudden exit into nothingness.

It is no mean companion while it lasts. It lights and warms and cheers the room with its friendly radiance, while the sleet beats an endless tattoo on the windows and

the breath of winter whistles past the corners of the house. The gentle, fluttering noise of the fire seems like the audible blinking of its bright eyes, and blends harmoniously with the moan and roar and rattle of the winter night.

The mere thickness of a window-pane separates the rudeness of the storm from the cozy comfort of the room, yet this only makes the room seem brighter and the fire seem warmer. The fluttering voice of the fire seems like a quiet assurance of the potency of gentleness over the noisy bluster in the outer cold and darkness, while the wailing of the storm is a confession of its own impotence.

Secure in his coziness, the Lonely Man lights his briar pipe and abandons himself to the sensuous enjoyment of physical comfort and the keener delight of undisturbed meditation. The pipe is a gentle promoter of both. The rich brown hue of its generous bowl and the deep indentations of its mouth-

piece give evidence of the long and faithful service which it has performed, and awaken pleasing expectations of the ripe flavor which no new pipe possesses. A pipe, like wine and violins, must have age, and, within certain limits, it improves with use.

The Lonely Man's teeth settle comfortably into the familiar indentations; his fingers stray in loving dalliance over the warming bowl; his lips caress the smooth amber of the stem; and he finds no small degree of satisfaction in these accessories of the act of smoking, which appeal only to the sight and touch. He likes best to smoke a pipe that has a simple, pleasing appearance, in harmony with the quieting influence of the tobacco's fragrance.

The pleasure of smoking is largely a matter of imagination. Of all the physical pleasures, it seems to be the most delicate, refined, and intellectual. It appeals to all the senses. The eye is gratified by the wreaths and columns and spirals of smoke as

they gracefully float in ever-changing forms upwards toward the ceiling, and trace their delicate and evanescent frescoes on the walls. This is a beauty of figure, color, and motion. In the outlines there is nothing that could offend the most æsthetic taste, and there is an indefiniteness that allows the imagination free play to see in the fleeting traceries what images it will. There are no glaring colors here to offend the artist's eye; there are no clumsy movements to disturb the dreamer's soul. It has all the charm of the impalpable, the impermanent, and the indefinite.

The smooth feel of the hard round bowl and the polished stem gratifies the fingers and the lips, where the sense of touch is most acute. There is an elusive element in this feel, that cannot be defined. Such is the poverty of the vocabulary of touch that we can only say, "The pipe feels good"; but there are many ways of pleasing the sense of touch, and this is one way that does not bring disquiet in its wake.

Taste and smell find in the soothing fragrance of the smoke their most subtle delight and exquisite satisfaction. This is the rich reward to which the faithful eating of a dinner justly leads. It would be a dismal world if there were no cooks in it, for it has been said that civilized man cannot live without cooks; but after the coarse, material business of eating, the pleasure of smoking seems almost refined enough to be called spiritual.

He who is addicted to the pleasures of the table takes the solid food into his mouth, chews it, and swallows it; the smoker merely draws the imponderable spirit of the fragrant leaf into his mouth, where it implants its subtle kiss and works its gentle sorcery, and is then exhaled in graceful clouds in whose interweaving lines and curves he sees the peaceful rural scenes of earlier days — the winding brook, the distant field of waving grain, the glinting rays of the setting sun, the faces of loved ones whose features he will never see again except in some spirit world,

be it the world of these dissolving clouds or some other spirit world we know not of.

Some unfriendly critic of the habit of smoking has said that a pig is not so depraved as a man who smokes, for a pig will not smoke. It is true that pigs do not smoke; at least, not many of them do. Unfortunately there are some pigs that do smoke, but this is not the cause of their swinishness; it must be something else. The smoker's pleasure is procured through the agency of fire, the type and emblem of all purity. The product of the fire is smoke; the residue is ashes. These things and their enjoyment are as far removed from thoughts of swine as filth from purity.

To smoke, and see the children of one's fancy in the fleecy figures of the smoke, and let one's weary mind feed on the past, from which the gentle offices of time have plucked the stings, while memory paints the joys in brighter colors than they ever had before, is man's high privilege.

So thinks the Lonely Man, as the storm howls on; and if we do not think exactly as he does, many of us act as if we did, and we ought therefore to alter either our habits or our views.

It may be (reflects the Lonely Man) that smoking has its penalties. So have all the other pleasures and enjoyments of this life. The pleasures of this life are like some luscious fruit that hangs on thorny trees beside our pathway through the world. The thorns inflict the penalties we pay for pleasure. If we pluck the fruit, the thorns will prick us now and then; but if, like cowards, we endeavor to avoid these thorns by shrinking to the pathway's other side, we not only miss the fruit, but fall into those spiky brambles whose barren branches bear no fruit.

The thorns that guard the pleasures of this life are not the only thorns along our path; and if we must in any case be stung, let us rather risk the penalties of moderate en-

joyment than those pains whose sharpness is not mitigated by reward of any kind. Though virtue is its own reward, the avoidance of a reasonable pleasure through fear of penalties is not a virtue. The fear of penalty is the skulking worm that creeps into the apple's core, and spoils its flavor if we pluck and eat it, or scares us into other thorns as sharp as those that guard the fruit if we do not. If we choose wisely and then pluck with care, we may avoid the points of many thorns that really exist; and if we banish fear, the dim and distant outlines of many penalties will prove to be illusions.

The only certain safety in this world is in the grave. There we may be as safe as none but dead men can be. No evil agency can harm the dead; the living are in constant danger. But it is a foolish soldier who shoots himself to escape the dangers of the battlefield; and he has as dull a soul who is too prudent to be happy now and then.

For my part, I prefer to take a middle course, avoiding certain penalties that are the price of pleasures not worth so sure a pain; and when I cannot choose my course, but must perforce be stung, I try to fix my thoughts upon the beauty of the thorn and learn something from the sting.

For example, this present loneliness of mine has serious drawbacks, but I am not certain that it is not a blessing in disguise. If it is, the blessing is as well disguised as are the advantages of poverty; but in any case it is my present lot, and if it has advantages, I shall soon learn what they are.

It is no fault of mine that, during my long absence, my old friends have been scattered to the four corners of the upper and the nether world. It is through no fault of mine that these pleasant-looking strangers who now surround me do not suspect that my companionship might be amusing. I cannot tell them; and they may not be so pleasant as they look. The few of them that I do

know do not seem like the friends of former times.

. . . . . .

I wonder if these old friends themselves would seem the same. May not old Father Time have played strange antics with their faces and their natures? When friends are parted by the accidents of life, and separation lasts till they become accustomed to it, it may be better for the permanence of their affection that they never meet again. Their friendship has become a finished product: it crystallizes like the language of a dead race, and so becomes a stable, changeless entity. If this gem of friendship be again dissolved, it may never crystallize again, and if it does, it certainly will take a different form.

The friend that lives among my dearest recollections of the past is one that I shall ever love. He has the same share of affection that he ever had. I count the fact that we have known and loved each other one of the imperishable rewards of life.

The friend I meet when ten long years have rolled away is not the friend I used to know and left. He tries to gather up the scattered fibres of the bond that once united us. I try to do the same. We try to guide the long deflected currents of our lives back into the channels in which they used to flow.

The effort is a futile one. New channels have been worn, and worn so deep that we shall hardly make the currents leave them; and if we do, they find their old beds full of the *débris* of crumbling banks and growing vegetation. The distinct path along which they once took their easy course is filled with obstacles and in some places quite obliterated; and so the struggling current either hurries back between the banks that give it easy passage, or, in its effort to seek out the old obstructed path, it wears another and a different channel in the face of Nature. A friendship may be formed, but it will not be the old one.

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The effort to restore an interrupted friendship is like the effort that a writer makes to find the happy thought he had a week ago. He calls before his consciousness the general import of the thought. Here is one of the very words he used in giving utterance to it; there is another one; and, struggling through the general miscellany of more recent thoughts, a few more words come slowly creeping to his mind. He takes his pen and tries to write the thing on paper, — which has a better memory than brains, — but what he writes is not the thought he had before. The substance is recovered, but the snap and sparkle of the thing are gone, and he cannot, by any effort of his will, compel the nebulous substance of the thought, which still is his, to take the definite and perfect form it had before.

The past is past for ever, and therein lies the safety of its treasures. If they are perfect they ever shall remain so, and we may love them as we will; but when we try to

duplicate them from the materials of the present, we shall be fortunate if we do not obtain results that are grotesque.

To feast upon the treasures of this past is one of the rewards of loneliness. This is a rare delight that flees from those who spend their lives in hurrying crowds.

II

THE VANTAGE GROUND OF LONELINESS

THERE is another and a greater gain in loneliness, reflects the Lonely Man. It is the gain that comes from thinking one's own thoughts and knowing that they are one's own and not the mere participation of an automatic mind in the unreasoned thinking of a mob. How many thoughts are uttered that are not the mere reverberations of the general voice? The thought-wave of the crowd strikes on the puny little brain of one man in the crowd, and he crys out, "Aye, aye! 't is so!" and thinks the thought his own. He passes on the thought with neither

more nor less of content in it than it had before, and thus the ever-widening circle of this mental agitation extends till it embraces the entire crowd and blends it into one unreasoning whole. The individual minds are blotted out. They flow together like the drops that go to form the ocean, and have no longer power to do the bidding of their wills, but yield to every undulation of the undifferentiated whole.

Unlike a wave of water, sound, or light, which loses amplitude with every increase of the distance from its starting point, the thought-wave in a crowd gathers in volume with its progress, and each reflection of the mental undulation seems to strengthen it. A whisper sets a mob in motion; the whispering quickly grows to murmuring; the murmuring grows to yells; and when the yells come back to him who uttered the first whisper, he yells himself, not knowing that he has but hypnotized the mob, and that his own reflected hypnotism has hypnotized himself.

There is something of the mob in every assemblage: it has not many minds, but one — if we may call that mind whose thinking is as reasonless and reflex as the vagaries of a dream.

What is the nature of a dream?

If the sleeper's head is high, he thinks he is being hanged; if it is low, he is falling down a well. The heavy food he ate last night makes an impression on the endings of his pneumogastric nerve, which carries this impression to the *medulla oblongata*, — the little piece of marrow that is the seat of all the vital centres of vegetative life. From here the spreading fibres of the *crura cerebri* conduct the food's impression to those gray cells in the brain where simple consciousness resides. It goes no higher. The citadel of Reason, wherein the godlike mistress of all sane thinking sits, has closed its doors and drawn the bridges from across the moat. The veiled enchantress, Reason, is asleep; and while she sleeps, the disconnected and ungoverned

points of consciousness within the brain, being roused to action by the food's impression, respond by being conscious in the only way for which their structure fits them.

Their different structures fit them to be conscious in different ways. One group of cells can see, but cannot hear nor smell nor feel; and if the impulse started by a sound or smell or touch can reach this group, the consciousness of sight — not touch nor smell nor sound — is the result. One group can hear, but cannot see nor feel; another feels, and others taste or smell.

If the slumber is not deep, these different groups may be united into a larger group, in which a little thinking, like the thinking of a printing-press, is done. It simply utters to itself the thing to which the structure of its type compels it to give utterance. The movements of a jumping-jack could not be more automatic. Its structure makes it only fit to kick or turn a somersault, and when its string is pulled, no matter how, the jumping-

jack responds in the only way in which it can respond — it kicks or turns a somersault. Thus physical disturbances give rise to grotesque fancies, which the dreaming mind believes and the dreamer sometimes acts upon.

If the sleeping goddess, Reason, were awake, she would at once perceive the groundlessness of all these various perceptions and conclusions. She would at once distinguish that of which she simply recollects or recombines a past impression from that by which she is surrounded. Her sovereign sway would relegate these flimsy fragments of the shadow world back to their proper sphere. She alone would be the guide of choice and action : her regal voice would fix the limits and conditions of belief. No conscious nor half-conscious act would be permitted whose motive did not first appeal to her and get her sanction. No credence would be given to groundless fancies that have no passport to the sacred chamber of

belief, and the agitation of a group of partly disconnected brain cells would not be counted such a passport.

But now, while Reason sleeps, the most absurd and idiotic fancies are believed. Both judgment and volition have become the sport and plaything of every chance impression: an elephant has feathers; a crocodile has wings; a man falls in a pit that is ten feet deep, and never strikes the bottom. He dreams he slays his dearest child, and dreams that he does right; or he is dead and knows he is, and still attends to his affairs on earth. Or, if the field of action is invaded, the dreamer leaves his bed and does things that he neither would nor could do if awake: he climbs down fire escapes or lightning rods, and thinks he is dancing on a level floor.

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Such is the nature of a dream. Such is the nature of all thought and action when Reason does not sit upon her throne and wield her royal sceptre, and seldom does she

sit secure upon her throne in the environment of a crowd. The presence of the crowd distracts and interrupts the inner currents of the soul by which Queen Reason holds communication with the lower mind. The currents seem to leave their protoplasmic wires within the brain, and, through the medium of sympathy, to leap through space to other brains when other brains come near.

The all-pervading medium of the mental universe is sympathy; and as the undulations of material ether transmit such forms of energy as heat and light and magnetism to every particle and planet in the world of space, so sympathy transmits these subtler forces of the soul from one soul to another, with an increase of intensity as their proximity increases. So fear or anger, courage, merriment, or hope, will leap through sympathy across an intervening space and cause a like emotion in another mind.

If this drawing off of currents makes a break in the connection between the higher

and the lower elements of mind, Queen Reason sleeps again, for she cannot keep awake without the stimulus of action; and, without the personality which Reason gives, the mental forces, melting into those of all the other minds about them, may be moulded by suggestion as a potter moulds a mass of clay. He of the crowd asks not, "What does Reason say?" but, "What says the crowd?"

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There may be strong men in the crowd who are not of it. There may be others not so strong, who, while they feel the substance of their minds and wills dissolving in the mental tides that ebb and flow about them, still do a little thinking for themselves. The rest have undergone complete solution in the waters of those tides, and have no more volition of their own than a patent music-box that plays whatever piece one puts between its rollers. They undulate to every wind of doctrine that blows upon them and move in

dull obedience before the one that blows upon them hardest. What they believe is what the crowd believes; what they approve is what the crowd approves. And if to-morrow the general conscience and belief shall change, theirs will change with them, and not because a ground for change is found, but for the sole reason that one drop of water in the ocean can hold no more nor less of salt than its next neighbors.

The crowd they follow may be either great or small; its sway may reach back into the remotest past, or be a thing of yesterday; it may be like a little lake whose slender streams keep it but faintly in communication with the sea, or like a mighty ocean, embodying in its substance the most of all the liquid minds that are or have been or shall be.

In any case such persons' minds are liquid, and their bodies do the bidding of their formless minds. They ever bend their suppliant knees before their shrine of fashion, be it the

fashion of apparel or that of belief. They wear the clothes she dictates, without regard to comfort, beauty, health, or common sense. They blindly follow where she leads in politics and religion. They wear the face of Europe out in waging vain crusades against the Turks, and blot the history of the world by burning heretics and witches.

They learn at school that three times one are three, and straightway go to church and learn that three times one are one. They are as confident that they are right in one place as in the other. In neither case do they believe because they hear the voice of Reason telling them that that which they believe is true. In their minds Reason sleeps; her sacred voice is dumb; and what is left of mental life in them is no more worthy to be called a mind than is the mechanism of a phonograph, which speaks back anything that one speaks into it, provided it is spoken loud enough.

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If they are scientific, their science will most certainly conform to the formulæ prescribed by that particular scientific crowd to which they happen to belong. If some rash member of the crowd brings forward some new truth which contradicts some old accepted theory, they ridicule his reasoning and treat him with contempt and scorn, — unless he is a leader of the crowd whom it is the fashion to believe. In that case, the very walls are damaged by their tumultuous applause. They wear out their eyes and microscopes in hunting further proof of what the great man says; and, no matter what they find, not until the current of belief within their crowd begins to ebb will the firmness of their own conviction weaken.

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In the field of politics their side is always wholly right, and the other wholly wrong, whether the issue be a tariff, stamp act, prohibition, or a war with Spain. No matter how their leaders blunder, or the country

flourishes or suffers, no matter how their promises are kept or broken, their side is always right and the other side is wrong.

If some great or small upheaval in the swamp of politics should make them occupy the ground their foes have lately held, and send the other party to the ooze and slime which they themselves have just forsaken, the doctrines which they fought before they now defend, and they execrate their own abandoned policies. For this change of heart their ever-ready tongues will find pretexts, and their heads will think them reasons. That the cause of their conversion is the presence in this new part of the swamp of their own particular crowd or dominating leader, they never once suspect. They may deny that they have undergone a change, so easily do they assume new forms. The shimmering surface of their minds will now reflect as true an image of the cat-tails waving over them as were the images of those dragon-flies that were embodied in their old belief.

The literature they read must bear the impress of that literary fashion which has dominion in their crowd. The books and magazines they read are praised and gloated over, not because their contents merit it, but because the author's or the publisher's name upon the title-page is a literary fetich in their crowd and has the magic power of making wheat and chaff of equal worth. They blindly think their favorite authors cannot make mistakes with reference to either literary art or facts, — oblivious of the axiom that no living man is perfect, and that nothing ever was or can be proved by being printed in a book.

What fallacy that ever yet has been conceived within the human mind and come to term has not been born on paper? If being printed could make an assertion true, I would print the consummation of my dearest hopes and thus transmute the shadowy material of hope into the solid substance of reality. I would write the opposite of many

things which now are true, and make them untrue; for the slavish ink would shape itself into a falsehood with no more trouble than it takes to tell the truth.

A truth must find its proof in reason or experience and not in ink, which can do nothing but present it to these tests. If these tests prove it true, it is true; if they do not, there is not ink enough in all the sea of books which groaning printing-presses vomit forth to prove one word of any truth.

The slaves who follow crowds mistake the medium of truth for truth itself. To them the printed statement of a fact is the fact, especially if they find it in some book which has the approbation of their crowd. Then, not only do they pin their faith and fix the seal of their approval to the book, but their interpretation of its contents is the one that has the sanction of the crowd. If in some lofty moral lesson wrought into the texture of a fable the crowd sees nothing but a

literal narrative of facts, they will see nothing in the story but authentic history, and the winds of prejudice which they let loose lash up the watery substance of their minds into furious waves whose thunders drown the voice of him who sees the truth. If, on the other hand, a love-song seething with the passions of hot-blooded youth is held to be a prophecy, they see in each particular sentence a prophetic meaning which the author never put there, and they completely miss the beauty of the song. If in the crude attempts of primitive, half-savage man to find an explanation of the universe, the crowd finds reason to believe that Nature's laws are temporal and mutable, they blindly do the same and strive to close not only their own eyes, but those of all mankind. Thus, they miss the lesson which the ancient writers teach, that man's solution of Nature's boundless mystery must be gradual, and that every honest effort in this line contains some grains of truth which may give it lasting fame.

If their crowd is one that makes a specialty of scoffing at the writings which some other crowd holds dear, they will sneer and scoff because their crowd does, and not because they ever had opinions of their own. An applauded shaft of sarcasm which they hear their leaders utter has the force of an obsession in their minds, — not because the situation warrants it (and sometimes it does), but because they know it takes the fancy of their crowd.

The book that lives because its gleaming rays of truth send swift conviction into minds that have not yet dissolved within the crowd (and, when Reason momentarily awakes, into those minds that have), lives by the same concurrence of opinion that gives unworthy fame to books that have but hypnotized the crowd. Who knows, then, whether any book that rides high on the wave of popularity is held aloft by virtue of its own eternal worth or by the force of fashion? One may decide by reading it whether it deserves the place it has; but, even though the book

be worthy of its fame, can one know that it is this that keeps its name and its author's name alive? How long must fame outlive its dead possessor to prove that it depends upon a true perception of the dead man's work?

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Those who compose the automatic and composite crowd-mind are as completely under the dominion of suggestion in their acts and feelings as they are in their beliefs. Their aims in life and their methods of achieving them are the aims and methods of the crowd. In the shaping of these ends and means Reason has no voice. If their crowd bows at the shrine of Mammon, so do they; if it worships Mars, they bend the knee to him; and they know as little why they worship one god as the other.

Thrift that impels men to provide for future needs is reasonable, and the just protection of one's honor, liberty, or life may necessitate recourse to arms; but it is not

thrift that gives to gold its devilish charm, nor justice that makes war the hellish game it is. It is the inertia of a somnambulistic crowd.

Swayed by the suggestion that the mere possession of unnecessary wealth confers more honor than any virtue could confer, the dancing puppets of the crowd scramble after money which they do not need and never can need, — often at the cost of all their honor, all their virtues, all their finer feelings, and all their decent human traits, — just to get the plaudits and the envy of other dancing puppets like themselves.

When the dreamer wakes, he cannot tell why he left his bed and found the most unspeakably intense delight in heaping up a pile of trash. Nor do the dreaming puppets of the crowd know that the keen delight they find in amassing needless wealth is not based on reason, but springs from the tyranny of a fierce suggestion dominating a somnambulistic crowd.

The joy they find in needless wealth would quickly vanish if their crowd should disintegrate and its individual members so awake. What pleasure would their vast possessions give them if they should be banished from their crowd, and their liquid minds should melt in the waters of some other crowd in which no drop of mental liquid but their own would find pleasure in unnecessary wealth?

But now, while the teeming millions of their fellow drops find their most ecstatic joy in the ownership of wealth, so do they. Though their fellows have no gold and curse the man who has, yet they feel the deadly charm of its baleful glitter, and — although they do not know it — what they feel is instantly imparted to the waters of the crowd about them, and helps to swell the heaving billows of its greed. One liquid mind thus acts and reacts on the liquid minds about it in awakening and maintaining greed for gold, as it does in transmitting and reflecting waves of murderous fury in a mob.

It cannot be denied that it requires ability to create a princely fortune, and there is some reason in the admiration of ability of any kind; but it does not follow that it is as reasonable to admire that which ability achieves. It requires some skill and courage to cut a good man's throat; and a successful counterfeiter can lay claim to some ability. But the crowd that follows Mammon pays homage not so much to skill and courage as to gold. If a man has that in plenty, no one cares in Mammon's crowd how much or little sense he has.

Really great men in that crowd are seldom great enough to feel that there is no special honor in a rich man's smile. Men of smaller calibre, who still have sense, count it gain to violate what sense they have to get the rich man's notice. The rest are so completely hypnotized by wealth that they see no other good or great thing in this world or any future world. Even though they hate the owner, they betray by their very hatred how they

envy him and would like to own his wealth. If they can, they imitate him, and if they can't, they often try to do so. If he has some crazy fad, they endeavor to affect it also. If he is illiterate, they do not care for learning. If he is immoral, their own morals may be lax. Doing what he does, they feel in some small measure the honor and the greatness which they think belong to wealth. They read in glaring headlines all the petty details of the rich man's daily life, and thus furnish all the reason editors have for printing such unprofitable trash. They join the rich man's club, and they attend the church of which he is a member. They build their houses on the rich man's street and as near his house as they can.

Rich men are not all fools, nor are all poor men slaves to Mammon; but those who are, and whose prayers to Mammon have not yet been answered, would give ten years of life to have any fool who is rich thrust his feet beneath their tables and eat their food.

Their doors will quickly swing upon their hinges to the magic touch of gold, and no questions will be asked as to how the gold was won. Their daughters' hearts, though cold as marble to the pleading voice of love, will melt like snow in summer in a crucible of gold.

Thus, however much they hate the man, by every word and action they glorify his wealth. By their envy and their fawning and their aping of rich men, and their base idolatry of wealth, the puppets of the crowd who have no wealth exhibit as complete a subjugation to automatic greed as that which dominates the greediest millionaire. Their fluid minds impart emotions as readily as they absorb them, and thus intensify the force of that false suggestion which gives to needless wealth the only charm it has. So the insane greed for gold dissolves and grows within the general crowd, while the gold itself collects within the coffers of a few.

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If the crowd is one of fighters, those who compose it are dominated by the love of war. They see no glory and no honor save that achieved in battle, and they see this just because it is suggested to them. Nature may have given them human hearts, but the plaudits of their crowd will make them glad to welter in a human shambles. Their greatest heroes are the men whose hands have shed the greatest quantity of human blood. Their interests are the interests of war. The cause for which they fight may be either just or unjust, but the delight they find in slaughter is not the pleasure that arises from satisfying justice; it rests upon the lust for carnage awakened by some breath of hell blowing on an automatic crowd.

The walking dreamer cannot tell, when he awakes, why it gave him pleasure when asleep to cut his brother's throat; nor does the war crowd know that the hideous joy it finds in wholesale murder is the suggested pleasure of a crowd that has been hypno-

tized. Poor human nature, however bad it is, would never do the ghastly things that have been done on myriad battlefields, if their doing were dependent on the approval of Reason.

But there is no other form of hypnotism that sweeps so surely and so swiftly through the most enormous crowds as that which is induced by the bugle blast of war. There is no other crowd that is so completely automatic as the crowd whose serried ranks comprise the means and food of war. The commands of officers are unconsciously obeyed. The men and the very horses of the crowd are mere levers and escapements, wheels and springs of some machine. In the tumult of the fight, the movements of the vast machine may seem less regular and uniform, but they are no less automatic than the movements of a marching army. And, as some monster engine whose wheels have left the tracks will plunge in mindless madness to its own complete destruction, crushing into

flying splinters every obstacle in its way, so when some accident of war starts a panic in the war machine, there is no means of staying it till its fury has been spent.

Hope and fear and hate and thirst for human blood are as dependent on suggestion in this huge machine as are the movements of a marching or a fighting army or the pandemonium of a disorderly retreat.

But the actual war machine is not the whole war crowd, and all the fluid minds within the crowd are dominated by the same suggestion that controls the soldier in the field. Ranting politicians who start the first war cry, demagogues whose duties to their families keep them at their own firesides, silly girls whose heads are turned by the splendor of their lovers' uniforms, kings and princes whose dominions are not wide enough, and all the hosts of others who see glory in the murder of a fellow-man for murder's sake, are members of the dreaming crowd, whose fluid minds have melted in its waves.

They get their feelings from the fluid minds about them and impart their dreaming frenzy to their neighbors. Thus the whole crowd is a huge automaton, with no will or reason of its own.

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In their amusements, the followers of crowds get their inspiration not from Reason, but from the crowd. If the latter finds its chief delight in straddling a two-wheeled machine, and riding like the wind to no place, for no reason, — so do they. The usefulness of the machine and the pleasure which its reasonable use affords are not the reasons for their riding it. They do it — though they do not know it — because it is the fashion of the crowd. Their minds, at this particular point, have melted in the waters of the crowd, which diffuse some specially soluble ingredients with greater swiftness than some others. The frenzy quickly spreads, like an epidemic of *la grippe*, till the very roads and sidewalks are ob-

structed with flying wheels. Little boys and girls, young men and women, aged men with flying beards and spindling shanks, ponderous dames with quivering outlines, blushing spinsters and other females grown too bold to blush, — crouch like monkeys in the saddle, while their reeking bodies pump and pedal, jolt and jostle, over stony roads to proclaim their own subjection to the craze.

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If the crowd is one that travels, your crowd-man travels with the best of them, not for the benefit that sane minds get from travel, but because of his subjection to the fashion of the crowd. He strokes his pointed beard in Paris and ogles shop-girls in Berlin, and swells with silly pride to think how like he is to the travelled members of his crowd whose ape and mirror he aspires to be. He travels endless weary miles in wretched railroad coaches to see some landscape that may not equal those he never saw at home. He grows eloquent over any pond in Europe, as

if there were no lakes at home. He lets a red-nosed guide fill his memory with fables about any crumbling pile of stones and mortar that some other fool has paid to see. He does it all because it is the fashion of his crowd, and does not stop to notice that he has been hypnotized. If Reason were awake, he certainly would not do all the things he does, or, at least, would do them differently.

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If his crowd is superstitious, so is he. He will lie awake at night and tremble while he listens for the footsteps of a ghost that some other members of his crowd have heard. If he hears them, or thinks he does (which is the same), he will pay a priest to exorcise the house. He will let the broken fragments of a mirror outweigh the reassuring voice of science, and make up his mind to die; sometimes he will succeed, for a false conviction may be as depressing to the vital forces as a fear which Reason warrants.

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If some crazy agitation is going forward in the neighborhood, and some new prophet or Messiah is being proclaimed, the crowd-man is the one who is most apt to go to scoff and then remain to pray. His fluid mind is so devoid of personality that it instantly assumes the form and nature of the minds within the crowd it happens to be in at a particular time.

Thus do all weak minds — and in a less degree all stronger ones — reveal their solubility in all the oceans, lakes, and pools in which the minds of men collect.

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To think one's own thoughts and to know they are one's own, and not the thoughts which melted minds absorb in mobs; to feel the sane emotions of the human heart, and know they are the feelings normal to one's self; to let Reason guide one's thoughts and feelings and desires, as far as Reason can guide human minds — these are the gains of loneliness. Strong minds within the crowd

may do all this, but such strong minds will not be of the crowd, and will be as lonely as the mind of him whose sole companion is his pipe.

But is there any mortal mind whose loneliness is complete? No; and it is well that this is true — well for the crowd and for the lonely mind. The world owes much to the automatic crowd-mind, for though it seems to work as blindly as some huge machine, its products, like the products of machines, are often either beautiful or useful. It does not act within the realm or under the control of anything like ordinary human Reason. It acts only in obedience to suggestion, but only when its working is opposed to Reason does it become a thing of terror or of ridicule.

There is a boundless field of thought and action in which the crowd-mind is our only guide. In this field Reason tells us only what is possible and what impossible; she cannot tell us what is real or what is best;

and here, if Reason does not tell us that the product of the crowd-mind is absurd, we may accept it. So marvellous an instrument as language is a thing which the automatic crowd-mind has produced without the aid of Reason; and yet this instrument is one which Reason uses and must use. Each word in any language is a product of suggestion acting on the automatic crowd-mind. The members of the crowd yield to the current custom of giving utterance to thought as they accept the current feelings and beliefs and false ideals of the crowd. In originating and perpetuating language Reason has no voice, and can have none. There is no reason that we can see why any language that exists is better than a thousand other possible languages would have been if they had been adopted soon enough; and yet, these other languages do not, and never will, exist. If we utter thoughts or even think them, we must use the instrument which the crowd-mind has given us.

Not only in its great utility is language wonderful, but in its revelation of the very laws of knowledge. In the structure of a sentence in any language the same eternal laws of logic or of knowledge stand revealed. However much the words of one crowd differ from those of other crowds, in their outer forms and their arrangement in the sentence, they group themselves into the self-same parts of speech, which represent, in all the different languages, the self-same elements of thought and knowledge. To the analytic mind a sentence is not merely the expression of a truth: it is that which shows the elements of which the truth consists. Although truth is eternal while fashions change, here is a field of truth which has been opened up to Reason by the caprice of Fashion. The unreasoned freaks and whims of Fashion, in the form of signs and words, have caught upon the unseen fabric of eternal truth, and now the Fashion's form reveals the outlines of what could not be seen before.

So in the realm of beauty must we be guided by the minds of crowds. Who knows what true beauty is? In different crowds ideals of beauty are incredibly diverse. The Zulu chieftain can see beauty where no European could, and the European's ideal would not appeal to him. Reason cannot tell us what is beautiful, and therefore if we satisfy that love of beauty which is in every soul, we must accept the products of the automatic minds of crowds or set up an arbitrary standard of our own without the aid of Reason. Who knows but that the fleeting standards of the beautiful which Fashion changes ere she gives them definite form may all contain within their false proportions some slight elusive element of beauty which is absolute? Who knows but in some distant century the blindly groping, automatic general mind of man may seize upon the universal form of beauty, and fix its feet on an eternal pedestal of truth?

Though Reason guides the lonely mind,

how limited is her sway! She guides it safely while it keeps within the field of knowledge; but how narrow is that field! How little do we absolutely know! We must believe, and act upon beliefs the truth of which we cannot absolutely prove. Even here Reason is our safest guide and helps us, if we follow her, to find that which most probably is true; but stretching out beyond the field of certain knowledge and reasonable belief, is the boundless field of hope and possibility. Aside from pointing out the line that separates the possible from the absurd, Reason gives no guidance here.

Can human hearts ignore this field and take no step beyond the point at which they must abandon Reason's guidance? If they go at all into this chartless infinite, — since Reason has no power to give us further guidance here than to show what may be possible and what absurd, — may not the guidance of the automatic common mind of man be better than no guide at all?

Man's heart rebels at the proffered leadership of a blind guide — a guide which sometimes makes of him a thing of ridicule and sometimes a hideous monster. Why should he have, within the field of mathematics, the blazing light of Reason, and in the realm of hope toward which the agonizing yearning of his heart directs him the uncertain leadership of a blind automaton? He would forget the theorems of algebra, and see as clearly as he now sees their truth the truth of all his dearest hopes.

How can he know that the hope of crowds is not a mere alluring mockery? The forms which hope takes in the different crowds on earth are as diverse as are the various complexions of the crowds. The form of hope is a fashion of the crowd, and many fashions based on falsehood have reared their haughty heads for weary centuries above the prostrate form of truth.

And yet within the realm of hope the automatic crowd-mind is man's only guide;

and though he kneel before what he conceives to be the throne of God and pour out impassioned prayers for some assurance that his heart's desire is not a tantalizing mockery, the echo of the empty air will be his only answer.

The crowd-mind is man's only guide beyond the pale of Reason, but though we must admit the blindness of the guide, it may be that it is not wholly blind. It may be that the fashions which endure the longest within the greatest and most widely separated crowds contain some fragment of a truth entangled in the meshes of their errors to give them permanence. It may be that the great Eternal — whom some call God, and some call Allah, some Brahma, others Nature, and still others the Unknowable — is making in the various forms which Fashion gives to hope in various crowds the only revelation of his being which present man could even partly understand.

The automaton that guides us gropes as blindly in the field of hope as in any other

field; but if this formless mind of crowds has given birth to that which has so true a form as language, who knows but that the same blind mind, within the realm of hope, may guide us to as true a goal? And as beneath the accidental forms of the most different languages of different crowds the same eternal laws of truth can be discerned, who knows but that the widely different forms which Fashion gives to hope in various crowds conceal some common and eternal verity? Who knows?

III

BOOKS, DOCTORS, IDEALISM, LANGUAGE, AND GOVERNMENT

THE Lonely Man's pipe had gone out. He knocked out the ashes, refilled and relighted his pipe, and again settled himself comfortably in his chair.

As he smoked, his eyes were for some reason arrested by some books on the mantel, and his thoughts taking the direction of his eyes, — which is somewhat unusual among lonely men, — he fell into a bibliological reverie which lasted till his pipe had been twice refilled and had grown cold after the last filling.

There were not many books on the mantel; for although the Lonely Man was a lover of books, he was not a very heavy owner of them, chiefly because he was more willing to lend a book than he was to ask for its return. Books that would certainly have been on the shelves of less critical readers were not in his collection, for he was not willing to interrupt his reflections to read a book from which he could not hope to get something commensurate with the trouble of reading it. He had observed that books which really contain facts worth knowing are, in these days of much printing, extremely likely to be mere compilations of better books, and that books which are not compilations are apt to achieve originality at the cost of veracity and exactness. He did not like to be led astray by the latter; and, as to the former, he found it more interesting to reflect on what his own experience had taught him than to read something in which one man tries to tell what another man knows.

If it is as true that a fool learns in the school of experience as it is that he can learn in no other, the Lonely Man must have possessed much knowledge, for, whether he was a fool or not, he had had experience of nearly everything that a man can read about in books, and of some things that a man cannot read about — at least in the books that are commonly read in good society.

In fact, as he himself put it, he was a fiddle every one of whose strings had been played from the key to the end of the finger board. He had had nearly every experience except that of being put into jail, and he had escaped that only through the agility with which he once got across a certain frontier. From this it is not to be hastily inferred that he was in any way deficient on the moral side. Even in the case of a man who is in jail, innocence is to be presumed till guilt is proved; and from *a priori* reasoning, it seems still more incumbent upon us to presume innocence in the case of a man who

has never been in jail. Especially is this true in a community in which a man can be imprisoned for using profane language to a hotel porter—which was the head and front of the Lonely Man's offending.

The Lonely Man's gaze flitted from a volume of Shakespeare's plays to a small Bible, from this to a text-book of civil government, and finally rested on a small medical compend. Of course, all medical compends are small. They are mere abbreviated compilations of other medical books, but some of them are, nevertheless, very useful in the hasty reviewing of previously studied subjects. They are not so useful in the study of subjects that have not been previously studied, for, while brevity may be the soul of wit, extent is a more desirable quality in knowledge.

This particular compend (mused the Lonely Man) is a fine exemplification in medical literature of much in little. That is to say, it represents, from the author's standpoint, much

advertising of himself by means of a little book, and from the reader's standpoint, much disappointment in an effort to get a little information.

It was written by a hospital interne or a physician in the first year of his practice, for the purpose of gaining sufficient prestige to enable him to procure a place on the teaching corps of a medical college. This fact is not mentioned in the preface, but the omission of a fact from the preface of a medical compend in no way impairs the validity of the fact.

The immature author seems to have said: "Behold, I also have written a little book, in which you can find the same facts that you could have found in a dozen other books. I myself have neither originated nor discovered a single one of these facts, or, if I have, it is one of no possible consequence, and its discovery was the result of an earnest endeavor on my part to do something that might attract attention to myself.

"I have no experimental knowledge of the truth of any assertion in the book, which I hasten to write before the subduing influence of practical experience has caused any abatement of the enthusiasm with which I accept the assertions of my masters. The book is small, but if I had waited for experience before writing it, it might have been still smaller than it is, and, in the omitted matter, the facts of my own discovery would have been most likely to be included.

"The publication of the book was urgent, for there are already several medical compends where one is needed. If I had waited longer, the disproportion between the demand and the supply might have been still greater.

"Some discrepancies between my book and a dozen other equally good books may be found, but they could not easily be avoided. It must be remembered that it is difficult for a dozen different people to tell the same truth in a dozen different ways, each of which

shall be different enough from the other eleven ways to bear the stamp of the author's individuality, and yet be perfectly true. This has been tried on numerous witness stands to the discomfiture of the witnesses. I trust, however, that the deviation of this book from others of its kind will appear to be an advantage to the reader, and not a mere fulcrum on which to rest the lever of an excuse for having written it."

If any one who has ever written a medical compend should happen to overhear my thoughts (continued the Lonely Man), I should hasten to assure him that I trust his compend is one of the few that are really needed; that if it is, its merits and its date will speak for themselves; and that I have really not been thinking of him or his book, but of the book whose author has just spoken for himself.

Of course this author has not actually said these things, and I should not like to assert, where any one could hear me, that it would

be appropriate for him to say them; but, however inconvenient it may be to be honest with one's fellows, there is no risk in being honest with one's self. This is a distinction which is often overlooked by persons who have learned the inexpediency of candor; and consequently, from practising diplomacy with their fellows, they unconsciously fall into the habit of practising duplicity with themselves. This is both unnecessary and unfortunate, for habits of intellectual honesty are not only perfectly safe, but highly profitable.

It is possible that it would be unwise to recommend such habits to all persons and under all circumstances; for if one is always honest with one's self, one may inadvertently be too honest with one's fellows, and it must be admitted that absolute honesty, however sound it may be at the core, is apt to be a little rough and jagged around the edges. Politeness and honesty are not always perfectly compatible, and it cannot be successfully denied that politeness is the least

objectionable form of insincerity. If my friend makes an assertion which I know to be false it would seem monstrous to tell him that he is either a fool or a liar, though that is exactly what honesty would require me to do. It would even seem unnecessarily rude not to accept the absurd assertion and believe it *pro tempore* myself.

Now, while these observations do not explain any considerable amount of the slovenly thinking that is done in the world, they explain the necessity of occasional loneliness in the case of those persons who aim to be both honest and polite. There is no need or possibility of being polite when one is absolutely alone. Politeness is a relation, and therefore cannot exist where only one of the related entities is present, and no violence can be done to its principles in an environment of loneliness, by the most rigorous honesty of which the human mind is capable.

For these reasons I find my chief delight when, in the evening, I can smoke my faith-

ful pipe and think my honest thoughts about anything in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or the water under the earth.

The Lonely Man's eyes still rested on the little book at the medical end of the mantel, and his thoughts coming back from their apologetic excursion along the line of politeness *versus* honesty, he resumed his meditation concerning medical literature.

A person who writes an unnecessary medical compend (he reflected) is not the only writer who is amenable to the charge of expanding the volume of medical literature without increasing its mass or enhancing its value. He really does on a small scale what some of his elders and exemplars in the medical profession do on a larger scale.

Here the Lonely Man paused in his reflections and almost blushed, for he had written some things himself, which, if they

were not medical, were, at least probably, useless.

Perhaps complete originality does not exist, he reflected. Perhaps we are all, in some measure, imitators; but even if we are, and if the products of my poor brain were superfluous, the reading of them did not fall to the lot of overworked doctors. In any case if it is a misdemeanor for an ambitious imitator to try to get the undeserved reputation of an author, his guilt should be estimated by the size of his offence. My books were very small.

I am even willing to concede this extenuating circumstance to the writer of an unnecessary medical compend. His book is also small, and in it the theme changes so rapidly that the reader is not unduly wearied by any protracted effort of attention. It is, in fact, almost as restful as a dictionary.

The chief offenders are the writers of some of those ponderous tomes which make the

interior of a medical library look almost as discouraging as the interior of a law library, and which contain thousands of facts that are cozily nestling in the luxuriant verbiage of a dozen other books of the same size in the same library.

Now, the world will never be able to repay the real discoverers of these facts, nor the army of faithful physicians who make use of them in their practice. These honest fellows evidently believe that the faithful performance of duty is its own reward. If it is, they are reaping a large harvest of reward; but if it is not, I fear they must collect the bulk of their wages in heaven.

Since these overworked and underpaid physicians are the persons who must read these enormous medical books, it is hard to forgive the writing of a superfluous medical treatise; and my own researches, so far as I have had the courage to prosecute them, warrant the conviction that some of these books — say about three-fourths of them — are abso-

lutely superfluous, always were superfluous, and contain nothing of any value whatever that could not be found in the other fourth.

The only excuse for this — but there can be none. The only reason for this needless multiplication of medical books is to be sought in the fact that medical ethics very properly makes it disreputable for a physician to seek to attract notice through open advertising or any other means than that of honestly trying to help humanity or to advance science. Since medical science has been advanced by some large books, as well as by some small ones, the medical profession is generous enough to assume that any medical book written in reasonably scientific language is the product of another effort in the same direction. Thus, the copyist attracts the desired notice, and still remains respectable. He may even attain a position of eminence in the profession, and thus acquire the privilege of enjoining modesty and unselfishness upon the very physicians who must read his

own colossal superfluities and actually pay for them.

Whatever apparent cynicism there was in the Lonely Man's thoughts had not been intentional, but had simply resulted from the nature of his subject. He was entirely alone, and therefore there was no occasion to think anything but what seemed to him to be the truth.

Now he seemed to forget the little book which had started his thoughts in this direction, while he slowly puffed at his pipe and watched the blue clouds float silently to the ceiling.

We have not studied doctors as much as they deserve to be studied, his thoughts continued. When our perceptive faculties are pricked or jolted into something like activity by the pains of disease or the fear of death, we become aware of the doctor's skill, knowledge, and unselfishness; but after we have been restored to a state of bodily comfort and

mental tranquillity, we do not pay much attention to him.

If we had paid more attention to him when we were well and in the full possession of our faculties, we might have noticed in him some interesting traits besides his willingness to get out of bed at two o'clock A.M.

It sometimes seems that the doctor becomes as different from other men in one generation as the Jew has become from the Irishman since Noah began to bring up a family. It is hard to tell how long ago that was, for Noah was a considerable sailor, and tales about sailors are likely to be tinctured with a flavor of romance; but at all events, it was a good while ago, and all the racial differences that have grown up among men since then are seemingly overshadowed by the specific traits which most doctors possess in common and have acquired in one generation.

This may be a mere unfounded fancy of mine, but I like to believe it, and I know

that the doctor is an interesting animal and that one of his most interesting specific peculiarities is the quality of his idealism.

Idealism in philosophy is one thing, in literature and art it is another thing, and in daily life it is the apex of an ascending series the base of which is agnosticism. An agnostic is a man who believes nothing that he cannot absolutely prove; a practical man is one who believes anything that he can prove beyond a reasonable doubt; a hopeful man is one who believes anything that he cannot disprove; and an idealist is one who believes what he knows is not true.

The doctor, in the philosophic sense, is apt to be an agnostic, but in daily life he is, and must be, an idealist; and his success is likely to keep pace with the degree of his idealism. This is not strange, for the naked facts of disease and death, with which a doctor has to deal, are not pleasant food for thought, and, like other naked things, they hardly seem respectable. The patient natu-

rally wants a physician who can clothe these facts with some semblance of cheerfulness and respectability; and in order to do this the doctor must fashion the garments out of the idealism of his own mind. He thus becomes on one side of his mind an idealist, while he is of all men most apt to be an agnostic on the other side.

I should not even think about the illustrations of this general truth if I were not alone, but loneliness carries with it the sacred privilege of thinking about the most horrible things in the world without fear of giving offence to any one or awakening any unpleasant thoughts in another mind.

For example, a man who has cancer of the liver and of several other internal organs consults the doctor because he would naturally like to get well. Any one with such a disease would like to get rid of it. The disease is likely to have progressed so far that its complete removal would require the dissection of the patient, and the careful scraping of several

thousand organs that enter into his structure, to get rid of stray cancer cells. Even then, immersion for a few days in absolute alcohol would be necessary to destroy the vitality of any remaining cells.

Of course it is disagreeable to think about such things; but I am entirely alone, and these are facts, and the doctor knows, on the scientific side of his mind, that they are facts; but the patient does not want to know it. The doctor knows that the patient wants to believe that he either does not have a cancer at all, or that it has not yet progressed beyond the stage at which it is curable — if there is any stage at which a real cancer is curable.

The doctor consequently holds out a greater or less degree of hope according to the extent of his idealism, and he actually believes, on the idealistic side of his mind, what he tells the patient. Of course the patient dies, but during his illness he has derived more comfort from the doctor's ideal-

ism than from any other source; and thus the doctor comes to carry his idealism into the treatment of all incurable as well as all curable disorders, to the mutual benefit of himself and his clientele.

The therapeutic value of idealism long ago became so apparent that, in the early part of the last century, there sprang up in Germany a school of doctors whose only resources in the treatment of disease were an infinite amount of idealism and an infinitesimal amount of medicine. They are called homœopaths.

The success of homœopathy encouraged a still further reduction in the amount of medicine and a still further increase of idealism, and the result was Christian Science with its various subdivisions. It exploits a theory whereby not only medicine, but all other material things — except money — are entirely eliminated from the treatment of disease.

The Christian Scientists are clever as well as cheerful people (mused the Lonely Man),

and they have entertained some incurables and cured some people who were not sick, quite as well as any one else could have done it. But when they imagine that they are the real discoverers of idealism, or that there is anything really original in their philosophy or religion or whatever it is, they delude themselves.

Bishop Berkeley, who lived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was something of an idealist himself. He constructed a system of philosophy in which he proved that there is nothing in the universe but mind that can perceive anything, and that there is nothing for mind to perceive but ideas and illusions.

According to his philosophy, that which we childishly believe to be a world of matter is a mere complicated but orderly system of illusions. When we think we see a tree, we merely have an optical illusion, which is no more real than a reflection in a mirror. If we touch the tree, we have a tactual illusion,

like that of a man who thinks he feels something between his toes after his leg has been amputated. There is really nothing there at all, and when we go away or close our eyes the illusion itself vanishes. If any other mind incorporated in an illusory body comes along to where we thought we saw the tree, it will have the same illusion and think it sees a tree. The illusion thus keeps popping into being whenever any wandering mind gets within eyeshot of it, and popping out whenever the illusory eye goes away or its mendacious vision is shut off by getting behind some other illusion. Thus, so far as appearances are concerned, everything goes on in this illusory world quite as if everything were real and permanent.

The good Bishop meant well enough; he merely wanted to prove the existence of a God, and he thought this was the only way of doing it. It must be admitted that if he had succeeded in proving his premises he would have rendered his conclusions ex-

tremely probable, for nothing short of omnipotence could attend to so much slide shifting without ever showing his magic lantern or getting caught with his illusions off the canvas when they should have been on. It would have been several times easier to create a world that would take care of itself, and have done with the job.

But the Bishop proved too much. Or rather, he did not prove enough, and David Hume came along and proved the rest. He took up the argument where Berkeley left it, carried it to its logical conclusion, and proved that there is no mind in the universe, and no universe for a mind to be in, — that there is nothing, in fact, but a string of illusory ideas which persistently flaunt themselves in the face of a consciousness that does not exist.

Now we are beginning to see what idealism really is; but only beginning. If we go back — ideally — to ancient Greece, we shall make the acquaintance of a gentleman named

Pythagoras, who proved without any difficulty at all that the universe made itself out of numbers. Now, that looks reasonable enough, for any schoolboy knows that numbers can make a world of trouble, which is exactly what this world is. But Pythagoras did not have his own way any more than the schoolboy does, for some of his compatriots proved that we do not know anything about numbers or anything else — that we absolutely do not know anything at all except that we do not know anything. Then some other Greek finished the whole melancholy business by proving that we do not even know that.

Now, in view of this nihilistic tendency of idealism, it seems unreasonable to scold agnosticism, as some good people have done, for having punctured a few idealistic soap-bubbles and cleared the atmosphere. Since the agnostic believes nothing that he cannot absolutely prove, he would decline to believe that a man who does not exist can prove that he does not exist, but he would readily

admit that a man who does not know anything can easily prove that.

We owe a good deal of this wholesome agnosticism to doctors, and it is this which renders their idealism peculiar, and makes it a comparatively safe aid to more material agents in the treatment of anything from smallpox to malingering.

Here the Lonely Man paused in his reflections, and his attention concentrated itself upon a point in the atmosphere just beyond the end of his pipe, where he seemed to see the last word that had passed through his mind.

Malinger (he reflected) is a beautiful illustration of the expediency of studying one language for the purpose of learning another. It is derived from the French word *malingre*, which means in French *to be sick*, and in English *not to be sick, while pretending to be.*

One's knowledge of French in this instance does not seem to help one very much in understanding English; yet there is a pretty general impression abroad that one can learn what English words mean in English only by studying the languages from which they were derived. This is why youths of both sexes, who are desirous of learning English, are encouraged to spend several of the most promising years of their lives in studying Latin.

The Latin language was good enough for the ancient Romans, but it, like the Roman Empire itself, became too old to keep up with the march of events. Consequently, after having left several hybrid descendants in various European states, being old and full of years, it died, and should have been allowed to rest in peace. Its corpse was a beautiful one, and, without having lost any of its beauty, it has become fossilized, and some people study it simply on account of its beauty.

After Latin had died, some priests seemed to get a monopoly of all the learning in the world, and, as there was very little of it in respect to its value, they did not want any of it to get away. To preserve it, they kept it concealed within the beautiful corpse of the dead language. This plan was successful; in fact, it was too successful, for it almost killed the learning, and did actually cause it to remain for several centuries in a state of suspended animation. Naturally, any one who wanted to get at the learning had to become acquainted with the beautiful corpse. Consequently, a custom grew up among people who wished to be — or be considered — learned, of studying Latin; and this custom has been continued on one pretext or another ever since, although now everything worth knowing — not to mention a good many things not worth knowing — is printed in every respectable language in the world except Latin.

Learning gradually recovered from its cat-

aleptic condition and became embodied in English and the other hybrid descendants of Latin which were not Latin, and which were no more like it than an octoroon is like a negro. However, the college professor, who is a good, honest fellow, and can do several things besides teaching Latin, had become so accustomed to teaching Latin and its dead friend Greek that he feared he could not earn his salary — which is small enough, in all conscience — without spending three or four years almost exclusively in training each student to travel *via* the cemetery to a knowledge of things which have mostly been controverted or outgrown.

Notwithstanding the professor's earnest efforts to infuse new life into the fossil remains of Latin, it gradually became apparent that it was so dead that it would have to be put in a museum to preserve it, unless some other reason than the old one could be found for teaching it. The reason was found. In fact, several reasons were found. The chief

one was that, as the professor had had more practice in teaching Latin than in teaching anything else, he could best give the student the mental gymnastics which is the main part of an education by teaching him Latin, —which he really does not need to know,— and thus give him that degree of mental acumen that would enable him, after leaving college, to find out for himself the things which he does need to know.

Another reason was that, since English is largely derived from Latin, we must study the latter in order to understand our mother tongue, although we study it by means of our mother tongue and neglect the latter while doing it.

It is as if the good professor had said to the student: "My dear young man, since English is your mother tongue, it is essential that you should understand it. Therefore you should not study it. You should study Latin — a language which died several centuries before English was born. You must

have observed that when one wishes to learn one thing, it is always best to study some other thing only remotely related to it. When one wishes to do one thing, one naturally does an entirely different thing.

"It is true that many of our present English words have descended from Latin words, but they are, in orthography, pronunciation, inflection, and meaning, so entirely different from their Latin ancestors that, after you have learned the slight resemblances that do exist, they will only confuse you and cause you to use the English derivatives in their Latin sense, and thus obscure your meaning. Therefore, you cannot understand English till you have mastered Latin.

"You will receive instruction in Latin through the medium of English, and, as you do not understand the medium, you will naturally understand the instruction. One always understands best what is explained to one in a language which one does not understand.

"Latin is thus a ladder by means of which one first climbs to a knowledge of English. It is true that English is the ladder by means of which one first climbs to a knowledge of Latin, but, after one climbs from the Latin ladder to the English ladder, one easily perceives that one was really never on the English ladder, and therefore never did any climbing, till one had climbed off it to another ladder and from the latter to the one from which one started.

"As I have already observed, many English words have descended from Latin words, and in their descent to us have become entirely different from the original Latin words. Others have changed very little. Now, since we must use the descendants and not the ancestors, it might seem most profitable to study the present meaning, inflection, pronunciation, and orthography of these words, whether they have changed or not.

"Nothing could better show your inexperience and unwisdom. The main fact to

keep in mind is that these words have descended, — *de*, down; *scandere*, to climb, — these words have *climbed down* from Latin ancestors, — *ante*, before, *cedere*, to go. *They have climbed down from Latin that goes before.* Now, that is perfectly plain. They have descended from Latin words just as an elephant has descended from a fish, and it is obvious that the only way to understand an elephant is to study a fish. When you perceive that the fish has a tail, whether you have ever seen an elephant or not you will at once know that it has a tail, and what it looks like. The scales of the fish will teach you that the elephant does not have scales but hair, and very little of that. From the bony framework of the fish you will learn the exact number, appearance, and uses of the bones in the elephant's skeleton. From the gills of the fish you will see at once that the elephant is an air-breathing quadruped and could not live under water. The total absence of a nose from the fish's counte-

nance would lead you to expect the elephant's proboscis.

"Of course, it might seem to you best to learn the main thing first, and then, if any time remains, to study the history and evolution of the thing afterwards. That, however, is pure boyishness. You must know that, since our precious school days are extremely few and brief, we must spend them all in learning the non-essentials or we shall never have time to learn these non-essentials at all. You will unconsciously pick up what English you need on the football grounds, at the races, and from the newspapers; and you will do it the more readily if you are not hampered with any preconceived ideas of English grammar. I especially admonish you against frittering away your time on so trivial a subject as English grammar. If you should ever become so unfortunate as to possess a knowledge of English grammar, or of the exact present meanings of English words, you will often hesitate in your speech,

through fear of speaking ungrammatically on the one hand, or seeming odd on the other. It is important that your speech should be fluent whether it is grammatical and precise or not.

"Latin orthography is so much like our own that, with the unimportant addition of *w*, we use precisely the same alphabet. It is true that we use it very differently; however, while you will not learn to spell English words by studying Latin orthography, you can easily conceal your ignorance when you go into business after graduation by employing a typewriter who never went to college, and who will probably know how to spell. As to your grammar, many of your correspondents will not know whether your letters are grammatical or not, and if they are ungrammatical, many of your other correspondents could not tell why.

"Not only is language an instrument of thought, but the study of its structure reveals

the structure and composition of thought and even of truth. Of course you could learn all this from the study of English, for a thought has the same composition in all languages; but if you learn thought-analysis from the study of Latin, you will probably think that you could not have learned it in any other way, and thus you will experience a pleasing sense of superiority.

"Remember that language is an instrument for expressing thought, and it is always well to have numerous instruments for exactly the same purpose, — one of them might get broken. Then, while you are getting a collection of instruments for the expression of thought, you will not be so increasing the quantity of your thought as to put a dangerous strain on any of the instruments. For this reason you should study several modern languages after learning Latin, for nowadays nobody uses Latin for any other purpose than that of developing ladder-climbing dexterity on the road to English or some

other modern language. Nobody pretends to speak it.

"You should study German, French, Italian, Spanish, and a few other languages; for you may some day go to one of the countries in which these languages are spoken, and want to order a meal and hear the waiter laugh at your French or German or whatever it happens to be. You will never learn to speak a foreign language like a native, and as well as you should be able to speak your own, unless you go to the country of that language and stay there for life, — and not even then unless you are the one example in a thousand exceptions. But you may learn enough of the foreign language to betray your nationality by speaking it, and you will also pick up a few phrases which you can conveniently throw into anything you happen to write when you do not know exactly what you want to say. These phrases will look well and will have all the charm of the unknown to the majority of your readers."

The Lonely Man suddenly paused in his reflections and looked round in a startled way, for he had begun to think so hard that he feared some one might hear him. He knew that the knife whose cut is sharpest is the one that has the truest edge, and he was too tender-hearted to wish to inflict pain on a mosquito. He would have been particularly unwilling to wound the professor, for he had known a good many of him, and had usually found him to be a pleasant, polished, well-informed man, who, somehow or other, managed to do considerable good in the world. He had also known several college graduates who had plenty of thoughts, and could both speak and write them in good English without the aid of a typewriter — in spite of having gone to college.

Why should we fear so precious a thing as the truth? he reflected. Philosophers have spun out their brains into cobwebs for the purpose of finding it. Explorers and in-

vestigators have sacrificed their lives for it. If we should suddenly become convinced that we could never possess it or know it in any degree, all hope and possibility of happiness, satisfaction, or contentment would instantly vanish. Who would want to live or to have lived if all thought, all belief, all feeling, all existence, is a lie? Truth is not wholly unattainable. We have actually attained some small fragments of it. We pretend to be sincere in our search for more. Then why do we surround ourselves with bent and strangely twisted mirrors which reflect distorted images of those realities that lie nearest to us? Why do we stand aghast when some unbidden hand holds up a glass that simply tells the truth? Would it not be better to change the facts that do not suit us than to keep the mirrors twisted?

Sobered and subdued by these reflections, the Lonely Man fell into a dreamy haziness of thought, which some people call medita-

tion, but which is really nothing but mental vacancy of a greater or less degree. At least, that is what it is to all appearance. Something may be stewing in the impenetrable depths of the brain, trying, like the hot water at the bottom of a geyser, to get itself together and rise to the surface. The Lonely Man smoked on with half-closed eyes and let it stew. It was no concern of his whether it ever reached the surface or not. His thoughts were his own if they should ever be born; no one would lose anything if they were not. In lonely hours, when one takes the hoodwink from one's eyes and lifts the veil from things one hides from others' eyes, the thoughts one has belong to him alone if there is anything that does.

His eyes wandered back to the mantel, and as he gradually became conscious of the treatise on civil government leaning over affectionately against the medical compend, whatever it was that had been working in his mind came through.

I have never read that book, he mentally observed. In fact, I own it only because an aggressive book-agent once imprisoned me in my own house, in the cheerful way that book-agents have, and the price of the book was the amount of my ransom. There was, apparently, not government enough in the book to prevent this high-handed robbery in broad daylight. I have learned from other sources, however, that government is that which directs and controls.

Now, everything must be well directed and controlled or it will sooner or later come to grief. A billiard ball must be well directed and controlled, or the game will be lost, and the things that direct and control it are its own composition, the end of the cue, the surface and edges of the table, the balls it strikes, and a few other simple little things of that sort.

The living organism known as a human being is a trifle more complicated than a billiard ball, yet it is directed and controlled

with wonderful precision by a government which is only more complicated than that which governs the billiard ball.

There are a few billions of cells in the body, grouped into various classes, each of which devotes itself to an occupation different from that of the other classes. Some of these cells operate a saliva factory. Of course, no one likes to mention the product in polite society, but it is, nevertheless, very useful and convenient, particularly when one wishes to swallow anything. Another group of cells operates a pepsin factory. The largest manufacturing plant in the body produces animal starch and bitters. It is called a liver.

The organism is supplied with air by a group of cells which operate a ventilating plant. Cells of another group carry the air from this plant to the employees in the various factories.

Arteries do the work of railroads; nerves perform the functions of telegraph and mail systems. Nerve ganglia are the sub-stations;

and the main postal and telegraph office is, of course, the brain.

Everything is admirably governed in this organism. Every cell knows its own business and attends to it. Each is kept informed of what is going on in the rest of the organism, and governs itself accordingly. It may receive its information from the main office or from a sub-station, but it acts according to its information, and does not require a policeman to compel it to do its duty. If the cells in one kidney become disabled, word is sent up to the nearest sub-station in the spinal cord, and from there it is telegraphed down to the other kidney, which magnanimously does the work of its unfortunate fellow in addition to its own.

If an army of hostile microbes invade the organism, the invaders are attacked by the first cells that happen to meet them, and held at bay till the regular army arrives. The professional soldiers are the leucocytes; they

never desert, and require no officers to direct their movements.

Every citizen is kept in constant communication with its fellow-citizens by means of the admirable telegraph system, and, being actuated by a high sense of duty, renders its services whenever they are needed, and receives its reward without a lawsuit. There are plenty of telegraph operators and mail clerks, but there are no officers. There are no kings or legislatures or courts here, yet the government is perfect. Of course there is a ruler called mind, but it merely directs the whole organism in its relations to the outer world, and has very little to do with the government of the individual cells; it could not, to any great extent, direct them in their relations to each other even if it wished to do so. Furthermore, this mind itself is nothing but the combined mentality of all the individual cells in the body. The cells are directed and controlled by their own nature and composition on the one hand, and

by the conditions which confront them on the other. They will rest or work according to existing conditions, and the character of their work will depend upon their nature and the environment in which they happen to find themselves. These are the exact factors which govern a billiard ball.

Now, society is simply a larger organism than a man. A social cell is an entire human being, and human beings are grouped into various classes following different pursuits for the good of the whole organism, just as groups of cells perform various services for the good of the individual.

The social organism, being a more recent product of evolution than the individual, is far less nearly perfect; but many people — most of them, in fact — are in the habit of thinking that it is not an organism at all; that it is a mere artificial aggregation of individuals held together like the parts of a clock and controlled by a social pendulum in the form of an artificial political government.

Now, it is a spring and not a pendulum that operates a clock. The pendulum furnishes no part of the energy that moves the wheels. In fact, it consumes a part of the energy supplied by the spring; and in some governments, as well as in some clocks, it consumes it all.

The fact that government, as we ordinarily see it, is not a motive power must have been appreciated by the gentleman who invented the contrivance for regulating the supply of steam in an engine. He called it a governor, although it supplies no heat or steam or energy, and moves no machinery. It is simply a dead weight which consumes energy, and which is necessary only because the steam is too stupid to regulate itself.

The social organism must have a governor or pendulum for the same reason. The stupidity which makes political government necessary to the social organism is the stupidity which causes individuals to ignore their obligations to each other, and this is the

same stupidity that makes governments bad. If we ever become intelligent enough to see that it pays to do right simply because it is right, and that it does not pay to do wrong even though a wrong-doer may escape punishment, we shall not need much political government. Until we shall have acquired that degree of intelligence, we shall not be able to get really good government, and afterwards we shall scarcely need it.

Here the Lonely Man looked cautiously round to be quite certain that he was entirely alone and that his thoughts were not being overheard; for he was aware that there are some honest people who are so intensely patriotic that they would regard it treasonable to teach men to be decent simply for the love of decency, if such a doctrine could possibly have the effect of rendering government less necessary than it is. He was also aware that there is, here and there, a man who thinks he has already advanced so far toward

that ideal morality which requires no government for its enforcement that he ofttimes feels constrained to go out and blow a few thousand fellow-beings into the Styx, just to show the tenderness of his regard for the rights of others and the excessive superfluity of all government for such gentle natures as his own.

Persons of both these classes are highly excitable, and about equally dangerous when excited. It is always wise — and generally impossible — to get them to wait till the end of an argument before unsheathing their cutlasses. For this reason, the Lonely Man always avoided political discussions, and did his thinking where he could think to the end of the subject without disturbing his own tranquillity or that of any one else.

No one, he mentally observed, who perceives that society has not yet become quite so perfectly organized as the individual, and

who is willing to allow that political government may, for a time, be at least as useful as a clock-pendulum, should be considered a dangerous citizen. But if any one should hear me think that the steam which runs the social engine, or the spring which runs the social clock, may in the course of a few thousand years, or less time, acquire sufficient intelligence to regulate itself, I might be suspected of holding incendiary views which I really do not hold at all.

If we are really afraid of disclosing the fact that the pendulum is not running the social clock, and is, in fact, only a more or less ornamental appendage which does not even wholly control the clock, we should take more pains to conceal that fact. The clock will surely find out sooner or later that, however automatic it may be, it is a living organism, and not a dead clock, and that its activity not only does not arise from the pendulum, but is even now chiefly controlled by conditions which the pendulum cannot alter.

We go up and down in the land and see farms producing all kinds of crops, and factories turning out all kinds of commodities, and railroads carrying all kinds of freight, and universities teaching all kinds of supposed knowledge, and newspapers printing all kinds of supposed information, and money buying all kinds of supposably valuable things, and we are deeply impressed and think the pendulum swinging back and forth in the clock case is doing it all; and the pendulum evidently thinks so itself.

The poor deluded pendulum is not even doing a part of it, and it is not, to any very great extent, even directing it. The individual man, like the individual cell or billiard ball, is directed and controlled by his physical, mental, and moral composition on the one hand, and by the conditions which confront him on the other. Political government has some influence in shaping these conditions, but far less than it imagines. Since a man has more life than a billiard ball, and a little

more intelligence and conscience than an ordinary cell, he is naturally influenced by conditions which do not exist for the billiard ball or the cell. The most potent of these conditions are self-interest, custom, and public opinion; and while the governmental pendulum is using its friends and conciliating its enemies with a view to being perpetuated or re-elected — and incidentally drawing its salary, — the social organism is being really directed and controlled chiefly by these abstract but extremely powerful factors—self-interest, custom, and public opinion. The governmental pendulum is powerless to control any of these influences, but it nevertheless amuses itself and the rest of the clock by enacting laws which, if they are good, would have been obeyed by all decent citizens anyhow, and if they are bad, will be uniformly evaded by citizens who are, at least, fairly respectable. In the meantime the criminal classes continue to disregard any law that does not interfere with them, and violate any law that does.

Political government may promote orderly activity, but does not cause it, as a little reflection shows.

Owing to his nature, a man must eat; and if he is too poor to buy food and too honest to steal it, self-interest will induce him to grow it if he happens to be where the conditions are suitable. Consequently, crops have been planted, harvested, and eaten, under all kinds of government, and beyond the jurisdiction of any. The results of sunshine, fertilizing, and tillage are not materially affected by political government or the absence of it; consequently, agriculture and stock-raising have existed where the tick-tack of the governmental pendulum could not even be heard. Of course, in such communities it is extremely imprudent needlessly to violate the rights of one's neighbors. Where no governmental devices exist for postponing or defeating justice, justice is likely to be meted out with astonishing swiftness. The neighbors of the horse thief or the cattle

"rustler" probably think, after he has been hanged, that if his conscience unassisted by law was unable to restrain him from stealing, it would not have restrained him from worse crimes if there had been any occasion for their commission; and that it is more economical to prevent crime by the removal of its cause than to maintain a government for the punishment of criminals only after their crimes have been committed.

Their reasoning is probably fallacious, but that is doubtless the manner of it; and it does seem difficult to see how a man who is restrained from crime only by his fear of the law can be converted into a really good citizen in any other way than by hanging him. It seems scarcely worth while, at all events, to maintain a very heavy or expensive governmental pendulum for his benefit, and he is the only person who requires any government at all.

Manufacture is as nearly independent of political government as is agriculture, for en-

gines will run sawmills wherever men want boards and can get engines, whether there is any political government there or not.

The supply of man's mental wants is not more dependent upon political government than is the supply of his physical wants, for sciences and languages have been taught in Arabian deserts without government, and in some European countries in spite of it.

We are in the habit of thinking that money, at least, owes all its efficiency to government; but that its value rests on a foundation which political government cannot influence is apparent from the fact that money has the same potency under the black flag of piracy, where all governments are defied, that it has in legislative halls, where all governments are made. It has, unfortunately, about equal potency in both places, and it is difficult to see how the government which money can control, can control money.

It does really seem as if self-interest, custom, and public opinion were the chief fac-

tors that govern society. Self-interest will induce men to try, in the most convenient way, to supply their wants, either under or beyond governments. Custom will make them quite as careful in the use of table utensils and in the cut of their clothes — which governments seldom try to regulate — as in their observance of the Golden Rule — which governments pretend to try to enforce. The public opinion of a few hundred thousand years will take root in a man in the form of a conscience, and make a good citizen of a person who is capable of being a good citizen, whether he knows what a policeman or a jail looks like or not; and no governmental clock-pendulum can create a conscience where it is naturally absent.

I can imagine what my friend, the politician, would say to these views. "My dear sir," I hear him say, "such opinions are subversive of all law and order. We must have such government as we have, for it is such government that prevents the individuals of

society from burning each other's houses and cutting each other's throats. In a republic, whether the government is good or bad depends upon the character of the individuals themselves. They must be good citizens themselves, for they elect the governmental pendulum which tells them how to be good citizens, and compels them to obey their own instructions. Thus, it is plain that the government which we politicians constitute is the only thing that keeps people decent.

"We preserve order and control society by enacting laws which you can see for yourself, in characteristic law English, in the statute books. Every one is supposed to know these laws, and no one does; not even the lawyers. We who make them do not know what they mean, and therefore we have a supreme court to tell us. Lest the court itself should not know, we have taken the precaution to make the number of its members an odd number, so that a majority would necessarily have to vote one way or the other.

The vote of the majority establishes the meaning of the law, and, as there is always a majority, the court always ascertains what the law means. We have thus reduced the quality of justice to a mathematical necessity.

"In this wilderness of laws, which no human being could possibly remember, you will find laws against murder, arson, theft, adultery, perjury, and other crimes, which, although no layman could be expected to find them, much less to know what they mean, keep you from putting a knife into your brother's heart just from pure love of deviltry, as you certainly would do if the laws were not there. Of course, the criminal will do it anyhow, just as he would if there were no government; but, if public opinion is strong enough, he will sometimes be caught — just as he would be without the aid of government. Instead of spending a few minutes, as a conscientious vigilance committee would, in trying — honestly trying — to find out whether he is guilty or not, we will take him

into court and appoint one lawyer to prove that he is guilty, whether he is or not; and another to prove that he is not guilty, whether he is or not. If the prosecuting attorney knows facts which would render guilt questionable, or if the defendant's attorney knows facts that would prove guilt with absolute certainty, each will be expected carefully to conceal such facts in order that justice may be properly administered. In order still further to insure justice, we select a jury of twelve men who must be so intelligent that they do not read or form opinions; and after this jury has been properly enlightened by the efforts of two opposing lawyers to conceal the two respective halves of the truth, it will be instructed by the judge in everything except what it needs to know; namely, what the verdict should be. The consequence is that the verdict is sure to be just.

"We have taken still further precautions to conserve the interests of society, by mak-

ing it possible for certain high officials to pardon the criminal if he should happen to be convicted.

"Now, since all statutory law is intended to be a mere amplification of the Golden Rule, — a mere detailed explanation of the moral obligations of the several members of society to each other, — it is plain that the making, interpretation, and execution of the laws should be in the hands of the most intelligent and moral men in the community. You must have observed that such is the case. A glance at any legislature, city council, or police force will at once convince you that the affairs of the government are in the hands of the most enlightened, moral, and refined gentlemen in the whole social organism. Indeed, it could not be otherwise. The habits which politicians must practice to extend their acquaintance and increase their popularity, and the associations which they must keep up to retain their influence, naturally have an elevating and refining influence

upon them and would tend to exalt them morally even if they were naturally less scrupulously moral than they are.

"Since the government is in the hands of such gentlemen, it cannot fail to represent a higher standard of morals than that which is represented by the general conscience of the whole community; in fact, by the universal conscience of man, which you call public opinion. Of course, if the general conscience can give expression to itself in the statute books, it becomes the proper standard, not because it is the general conscience, but because it is law. You have noticed how easily the voice of the general conscience becomes embodied in the law.

"Of course, in monarchies, it is difficult for the social organism to give complete expression to its will in the government, but there is no difficulty of that kind in a republic. Three or four cliques of politicians, each consisting of a dozen or more men, will attend to the matter for you, since you can-

not possibly attend to it for yourself unless you devote your whole life to it. Each clique will give you an opportunity to vote for one man for each office. If one man does not happen to suit you, you can vote for any one of the two or three others.

"You tell me that you approve of a government which represents the greater part, or even the greatest one of several parts, of the sum of all the individual wills in the community, but that you would like to be assured of being able to contribute the expression of your own will to the formation of that sum. While you do not want the community to submit to your will, you want the assurance that your will shall be heard and added to the rest before majorities or pluralities are estimated.

"This assurance you have. For example, if you live in a community of a hundred millions of souls and want to vote for your neighbor Jones for governor, each one of the three or four cliques will nominate a man,

and thus your worthy neighbor will have three or four chances in a hundred millions of being nominated; and in most communities you cannot vote for him unless he is nominated. You will thus have three or four chances in a hundred millions of having a chance to give expression to your poor little insignificant will.

"If you would give as much attention to politics as we professional politicians who attend to nothing else, — thus furnishing a beautiful example of good citizenship, — you would have a still greater chance of having a chance to give expression to your will; but it would be unreasonable to expect a greater latitude of choice than we give you. As it is, a few dozen men decide for a few millions which ones of these millions shall constitute the three or four to be selected from. This allows you even greater latitude of choice than can be enjoyed in an absolute monarchy, where one clique has got complete control of the government.

"The difference between the republican and the monarchical cliques is that the monarchical are born of distinguished families, while the republican are bred of political bosses."

Here the Lonely Man paused and listened, for it almost seemed to him that the stillness had been broken by a harsh, rasping sound. It was, however, only the impression produced by the last word, and he did not see how he could have selected a different word. In fact, he did not see how he could at any point have altered the speech which he had put into the politician's mouth, for he had frequently heard him make what would have been this speech if it had been rendered into exact English.

I must admit (he reflected) that in this form the speech sounds somewhat satirical, but the satirical effect does not proceed from me. It merely arises from reducing the

speech to language which shows precisely what it means, and then comparing it with the truth.

If I were not alone I should not consider the speech in its relation to the truth. It would not be polite; but in solitude the laws of politeness cannot be transgressed even by allowing one's thoughts to drift toward the truth.

I should be unwilling to cause the politician the slightest annoyance, for he is a proverbially "good fellow," and as he is no worse than we make him, I really think he is entitled to courteous treatment — treatment more courteous, in fact, than that which he himself habitually administers, during the heat of a political campaign, to his brother politician of any opposing political party. If instead of thinking what he has told me about himself, I had thought what his brother politician has told me about him, I should have spoiled my mind for all respectable thinking in the future.

But I do not believe the politician and his brother are as bad as they accuse each other of being. They are still in some measure useful, but the measure of their usefulness is less than they pretend to believe it is. The government which they give us is still, and may always be, in some respects necessary. A small community may be able to dispense with political government altogether, but a large one cannot till self-interest becomes something more than ordinary selfishness, and public opinion comes more nearly into harmony with truth, and custom accords better with conscience and justice. Already these three factors shape the course of events in any civilized community to a far greater extent than does any political government; and their influence is constantly increasing. It will continue to increase till political government becomes more nearly nominal than it now is, and then we may begin to wonder whether the influence of self-interest, public opinion, and custom will ever become so

powerful that it will absolutely control the course of human events, and leave nothing for political government to do.

It will not, till self-interest becomes something which will impel the individual to seek primarily the advancement of the race, and to seek his own advancement only so far as such advancement may proceed without injury to any other human being. It will not, till public opinion becomes so true and so strong that the individual will fear it more than he now fears the punishments of the law. It will not, till custom becomes more nearly uniform and comes so far into harmony with conscience that private practice and public profession will agree. Then the current of human events will be so far removed from the control of political government that the governmental pendulum will undergo spontaneous atrophy from lack of exercise, and either entirely disappear or become so rudimentary that no good citizen will be annoyed or alarmed by its ticking, as

he now most assuredly is by every political campaign and every session of a parliament or a legislature.

In the meantime, it is possible that good citizens might spend their time just as profitably in trying to educate public opinion so that it will always be a safe and compelling guide as they could in tinkering with the pendulum. The pendulum likes to receive attentions; it thrives on them. If the attentions are somewhat violent, it thrives all the better; for naturally, the more violently a pendulum is pushed, the more violently it swings back. If the pendulum is in some measure an organ of a living organism, as any governmental pendulum is, the exercise has the same effect on the pendulum that it would have on a muscle. It promotes its growth and increases its strength. Any malcontent who thinks he can destroy a governmental pendulum by attacking its representatives with physical violence should remember that no dumb sheep ever stopped a swing by

butting it, and that so long as there are murderers like himself to be hanged, there will be at least one valid reason for the existence of the government which he would like to destroy. An educated conscience would restrain one from committing murder, but it would not confer upon one a relish for hanging murderers. One would still prefer, when there is any hanging to be done, that the sheriff should do it.

However, even if the pendulum does like attention, we cannot afford to devote all our time to teaching the politicians how to teach us to be good; we must spend some time in learning how to be good without being taught by a politician, and how to feel ashamed when we are bad, without the aid of a policeman.

When we offer to the politician this explanation of our indifference to politics, he softly smiles in a sweetly supercilious way, and mildly expresses his contempt of a kind of social order that depends upon an educated

moral sense instead of statutory law. It is a pleasant little way of his, but in his gentle derision of the force of public opinion he forgets that the only potency of statutory law is that which public opinion and custom give it. If he doubts it, let him enact a law that will be universally condemned by public opinion; and if he thinks his laws are stronger than custom, let him try, by statutory enactments, to alter the style in ball dresses or street costumes.

If, instead of enacting any more laws against obtaining money under false pretences, we should try to create a public opinion that would condemn such practices, it might presently become as reprehensible to cheat in a horse trade as it now is to eat pie with a knife. Law makes the one wrong: custom, the other; yet many a man who would consider himself disgraced for life if he should be caught in the violation of the custom does not scruple to violate the law and boast of it afterwards.

There are honest fellows who, in the manipulation of their table utensils, do not always comply with the requirements of polite usage, and who still refrain from cheating in their dealings; but that it is not statutory law which restrains these persons is evidenced by the fact that they are precisely the men who know least about the law and care least about its intricacies. They are honest simply because they think it is right to be honest.

If, instead of enacting any more laws for the purpose of making ourselves pay our debts, we should get into the habit of simply paying them, and considering it immoral not to pay them, the practice of promptly paying just claims might presently become as nearly universal as is the practice of "tipping" negro waiters and sleeping car porters. Neither statutory law nor conscience compels us to give "tips," but custom does — and we do it.

In our idolatry of statutory law, it may be well to bear in mind that a statute is

nothing but a politician's words preserved in ink; its potency is what the public conscience gives it, and no more. We have made violations of the moral law illegal by statutory enactments; it might now be well to make them disgraceful, also, by stimulating the public conscience. And if, while we are teaching ourselves to be honest for the love of honesty, we should have any time to devote to politicians and their laws, we might spend it in weeping at the spectacle of a legislature trying, by laws of its own enactment, to prevent itself from accepting bribes.

IV

THE SEARCH FOR SATISFACTION

WHEN the Lonely Man resumed his thinking, he fell to wondering whether such purely physical comforts as food, warmth, and a good smoke, and such purely mental pleasures as reading and reflection, can really satisfy a man.

He quickly decided that however much better than non-existence they may make existence, they still leave something to be desired.

Can a human being really be satisfied by any means ? he mused. I have never known one who was. At least, I have never known

one who would admit it. I have noticed, however, that he who most loudly proclaims the vanity of life clings most tenaciously to life and to its vanities — especially to its vanities.

It may be (he reflected) that cursing the miseries that one does not have enhances the joys that one does have. Thus, a little dog barks most savagely at a big one when he is on the safe side of the fence. He seems to intensify his realization of his own safety by snarling at a danger which cannot reach him. The pessimist may do the same thing for the same reason; for, when there is no protecting fence, there is likely to be more running than barking, among men as well as among dogs.

At all events, the comfort of the body and the entertainment of the mind can satisfy only two of the persons in the human trinity, and man has a threefold being. Of course, anatomically, he does not have. Anatomically he is only a body; but, if it can be

avoided, one does not consider one's self anatomically in good society, which my society is.

Man has a body, a mind, and a heart. This is not anatomical, but it is true; and it will not do to say that the heart is a mere part of the body, and that the mind is a mere molecular motion of another part. Anatomically this may be true. In the dissecting room and the laboratory it certainly appears to be true, but one misses some things in the dissecting room and the laboratory which one notices in daily life; the mind and the heart, for example. And since one must have names for things even to think about them, it is best to employ the names in common use, even if the same names are also employed to denote objects which, in the dissecting room and the laboratory, turn out to be mere organs and functions of the body.

Mental phenomena are doubtless dependent upon molecular changes in the brain, but they themselves are not molecular changes, how-

ever inseparable from such changes they may be. These phenomena are the subjective side of mind, which is just as real as the objective side. Without the aid of his own subjectivity, the new psychologist could never interpret his objective findings in the laboratory. The old psychology had its uses; it gave man a mind and a heart, which he still has — sometimes.

And now, the question before me is, Can man employ his body and his mind so actively and so agreeably that he can be satisfied without employing his heart at all?

It is impossible to study satisfaction objectively. We may take the other fellow's word and assume that he is satisfied when he says he is, or looks as we think we should look if we were satisfied; but this is pure subjectivity — sometimes ours, and sometimes the other fellow's.

Having arrived at this conclusion, and considering his own subjectivity as good as any,

the Lonely Man allowed his thoughts to drift back through the past in search of a time when his physical and mental delights were sufficient to make him happy without any apparent aid from his heart. He seemed to be finding it, but in order to make a better roadway for his mind he lighted his pipe, and in the clouds of smoke he followed back the past till it quite eluded him.

At this point he saw himself, a little wide-eyed interrogation point — if an interrogation point may be supposed to have eyes — emerging from a deeper past into whose darkness he could not penetrate.

"Ah, I missed it," he said. "I must think in the other direction."

So he let the indistinct and fleeting visions in the smoke sweep up to the less distant past, and then he found the time of which he was in search. It was a winter of his early childhood.

How snow and cold and winter storms had come to have the fascination for him

which they had he did not know, but these things seemed to have given this winter all the special charm it had; and it had always seemed to him that the witchery of winter gets more quickly into any healthy human blood than does the charm of any other season in the year.

This winter had been an ideal one. Its days had been so cold that each one was a winter in itself. The sun had ceased to be of any use except to light the world by day and mark the advent of the night by setting. When it had disappeared behind the snowdrifts in the west, and its icy light had quite died out, the wind commenced its revels, like some mighty giant, tossing all this arctic world of snowdrifts in the air, and heaping up the snow in other drifts that seemed to please its fancy better. He almost seemed to sit again beside the roaring evening fire and listen to the storm's hoarse voice as it bellowed round the house and went shrieking through the tree-tops. He saw the red glow

creeping up the panting stove, as it bade defiance to the storm. More wood was piled upon the flames, and when the iron door was opened to admit the wood, a flood of light lit up the room and painted weirdly dancing shadows on the wall. He heard the sweep and swish of drifting snow, and felt the quaking of the house as it received the heavy broadsides of the storm. He heard the lowing of the cattle muffled by the rush and roar of the wind. A frightened crow cawed overhead, as it was tumbled through the upper air. Then an impish little tongue of snow came darting through the keyhole, and he heard the door resist the onslaught of a heavy blast of wind. This was a carnival of Nature for the entertainment of a boy who was not old enough to fear.

Then while every night was cold, not all were stormy. Sometimes the moon shone down upon a world as silent as a tomb and whiter than its marble walls. A creaking footstep could be heard a mile away. The

hooting of an owl would lend its weirdness to the silence and make the snow-clad trees seem more like spectres than they seemed before.

But the halo of glory which gentle time weaves about the past does not obliterate or even obscure the prosaic fact that the joys of childhood are, to a great extent, those which one shares with animals and cannibals. They are the joys of eating and drinking. Consequently, mingled with the Lonely Man's visions of the outer world's picturesqueness, there were memories of those pleasures which appeal less to the imagination than to the appetite. There were visions of a table laden with smoking dishes, whose teasing fragrance crept under doors and into one's nostrils a half-hour before supper was ready, and made one think that half-hour a quarter of a century. There were memories of things so good to eat that their taste lingered in the mouth after one was through, and made one sorrowful that one could eat no more. It got into one's memory and,

in after years, sometimes made one wonder whether the world had forgotten how to cook, or one had merely lost the keenness of one's appetite. There were memories of turkeys in every stage of evolution from eggs to drumsticks. There were recollections of irresistibly sweet things that came out of glass jars from obscure shelves in the cellar, and of bags of nuts half hidden in the mysterious dimness of the same cellar, and of bounteous apple-bins and the insidious fragrance of their striped contents; and running through it all was the poetry of winter and the unspoiled appetite of a boy.

He had found the time of which he had been in search, but this vision of the past was marred by the conspicuousness of the gastronomic part of it. It was disquieting to regard his happiness the result of cannibalism, yet how could he help it? His dream of this ideal winter of his childhood had been, aside from the weather, a dream of cooked animals and raw fruit. His chief pleasure seemed, at the present moment, to have been derived

from eating these things. He could see no complete break in his relationship to all the things that live and grow in the world; and, by all authorities, a man — or a boy — who eats his relatives is a cannibal.

We must eat these things, he mused, in order to live, for one cannot live on air and water; and even if one could, could one be absolutely certain that inorganic things are as dead as they seem, and that the boundary between them and organic things is any more distinct than that between the vegetable and the animal world?

As his thoughts dwelt on a universe teeming with living beings that find their most substantial pleasure in devouring their brothers and cousins, he was oppressed by a momentary suspicion that this world is not a felicific institution.

Perhaps (he reflected) hunger is merely an unrecognized form of fraternal love, which

impels us to elevate the creatures which we eat to our own exalted plane of life, — which we do when we convert their substance into our own. These creatures would undoubtedly enjoy being eaten if they could understand the purpose of the act, and realize what they gain by playing the passive role in the process of digestion.

This was certainly a new interpretation of brotherly love, but the Lonely Man could really see no other interpretation of it that would enable him under all circumstances to practise such love. When he attempted, however, to realize in thought the bliss of having that done to him which he was doing three times a day to "others," he was grateful that there is no higher animal than man to favor him by doing it.

Then it suddenly occurred to him that man is not so fortunate — or unfortunate — as he appears to be. He is finally digested himself, by Nature. She gives up her sim-

plest substance to plants, which give up theirs to animals, which give up theirs to man, who gives his back to Nature, which (or who) is doubtless edified by the whole process.

"Ha," he exclaimed aloud, "I have narrowly escaped conclusions that would shortly have become dismal. How comforting it is to perceive that this whole process of eating and being eaten, and dying and being born again at numerous different places at the same time — this process of integration and disintegration — is a mere process whereby the soul of Nature (or — to speak philosophically — the thing-in-itself) comes to itself!"

Then supposing that he knew what he meant by the "soul of Nature," and "the thing-in-itself," and "comes to itself," he fell into a complacent frame of mind which permitted his thoughts to slip back to where he had left himself destroying potential trees by eating hickory nuts, and destroying actual poultry by eating fried chicken in a little old farmhouse half buried in snow,

some — ah, never mind how many — years ago.

As when one turns to look a second time at a painting in which the first look revealed nothing but the manual skill of the artist, so now the Lonely Man turned his mental vision once more upon the scenes he had just reviewed. He was not exactly certain that his heart had had no part in the satisfaction which his memory had brought to light. There began to steal upon him a conviction that he would not have had this satisfaction if he had not found it in an atmosphere of love; and the longer he mused, the more distinct the conviction became. If one looks long enough at a great painting, one presently sees past the colored figures in it, and into the artist's soul that seeks expression in the painting and gives the beauty and the meaning to it. So now the Lonely Man saw past the forms of such things as snowdrifts and food, and saw the source and meaning of their charm.

From the dim chaos of his recollections there presently emerged a woman with a face of singular sweetness, from which the ravages of time had not removed the beauty even when old age had crowned her head with white, and traced the record of her weeping at the corners of her eyes, and dropped a blood clot in her brain to make her blind, and then another clot to dim her mental vision, and then in mercy quickly dropped another one to make her sleep the dreamless sleep. It was his mother's face.

What memories of loving deeds and of a mother's loving tenderness flit through his mind as his fancy plays about the fireside of his boyhood home the present writer cannot tell. He cannot see so deep into another's soul that he can follow fancy far when it begins to play upon the heart-strings; and if he could, he has not the skill to make another feel what he would see there, for his pen is not the rod of Moses, which was said to have the power to melt a rock in Horeb

and make it weep, and no less a power could do justice to such a theme; and if he had the skill he would not use it to lay bare a human heart before a world that is not always tender in its treatment of such things as hearts.

But shall we say the Lonely Man has no heart because we do not see one? Does the swordsman have no soft left hand because his sword hand is the one we make him use most, while he keeps his other hand behind his back? Have we not been taught by both precept and example that hearts should be concealed as if it were a crime to have one? Have not learned books been written to show that a man is ten different kinds of degenerate if he has a heart at all? And have we not so far profited by our teaching that we hide away our hearts in these things we call ourselves and show the world, while we try to satisfy our hearts with the vicarious emotions provided by the novelist and the play-writer?

But it does not satisfy them: it is like trying to satisfy a healthy appetite with a bonbon. Did you never go supperless to one of those receptions where every one is well dressed and a man stands holding three separate dishes in his hands and drinks an ounce of tea and eats a biscuit as large as a postage stamp and feebly smiles and tries to look happy while doing it? Does it satisfy? No; you hunt up the hostess before all the restaurants close for the night and tell her with a winning little smile that you have had a delightful evening, and then you go to one of those places where men sit with their hats on at tables without covers, where there is no carpet on the floor and the waiter calls out "Brau one!" and brings you beef and potatoes, and you eat, and eat, and eat till you have had enough.

Has your heart never rebelled in the same way after you have tried to feed it with esoteric philosophy at the shrine of an intellect dressed in a woman's gown? And have you

not in starved desperation sought the wholesome presence of the landlady's daughter, who has real round arms and a pretty face and lips that like to be kissed and an actual heart, even if her hair is not always tidy, nor her shoes always laced, nor her apron always straight, and though she is innocent of Browning and never heard of Emerson?

Were you altogether a criminal if your feelings went a little further than you intended, and you fell in love with her and had to tell her a few lies to prevent her from falling in love with you and letting you marry her and make her miserable for life?

Oh, yes, we all have hearts whether it is proper and desirable to have them or not, and they play grotesque pranks on us, now and then, to punish us for our stupid treatment of them. The Lonely Man has a heart; and as he sees his mother's pretty face bending over him — a boy of six once more — and feels her tears fall on his tender foot to ease the pain she caused by pulling out a thorn,

and hears her frightened voice at night inquiring why he groans when he thinks his head will split, and thinks of all the thousand other ways in which his mother's hand and heart have given their only charm to all the other charms his boyhood home has ever had, his eyes grow dim and he sighs and says aloud, "No satisfaction is complete unless it satisfies the heart. However we may placate ourselves with makeshift substitutes, there is no substitute for this."

He leaned farther back in his chair and stared through the clouds of smoke at the ceiling, to compose his mind for the business of deciding how this satisfaction may be found.

Presently he took up the theme again and reflected that it would be unreasonable to expect a mother's love throughout life.

In the natural course of events (he mused) mothers must generally die before their offspring. Even if they did not, and if we

could have their love throughout life, it would not always satisfy the heart. With the advent of manhood the heart longs for more than childhood gave it. So, let me suppose I am standing upon the threshold of manhood and am casting about for something that will satisfy the heart as fully as it was satisfied in childhood.

My heart is no longer that of a child; its satisfaction will no longer be a simple matter. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect to satisfy it at all; but why should it be? Childhood was a period of credulity and was oppressed by a thousand groundless fears which the knowledge of later years has dispelled. The pretty soap-bubbles of childhood were most disappointingly fragile. The wisdom of manhood should enable me to fix my affections upon durable things, and the enlarged capacity of manhood should enable me to enjoy these things better.

So I decide that, the satisfaction of the heart being possible and being the most im-

portant thing in life,—the only thing, in fact, which makes life worth living,—the finding of such satisfaction may reasonably be considered the serious business of life. I look around to see how the world goes about it, and I find that, in the present organization of society, the most serious business of life consists chiefly in trying to get the biggest piece of pie for one's self. This, then, must be the means of satisfying the heart; and I untie myself from my mother's apron strings at twenty-five,—at twenty, nay, at sixteen,—and get into the line at the pie counter as quickly as possible. Never mind how I get in. If I am strong enough, I elbow some other man out and take his place. My object is a worthy one. It is the satisfaction of the heart. Therefore I elbow my fellow-man out of his place, as I could not possibly do if I had a heart worth satisfying, and endeavor to get my hands on as much pie as possible without any needless delay.

The other man may be the better man, but the crowd at the pie counter will not think so if I get ahead of him in the scramble for pie. It is their approbation which will make me as happy as I was on those winter evenings at the fireside of my boyhood home.

The more pie I get, the happier I shall be, so I shall grab in a way that will teach men how to grab as they never grabbed before; and I shall look pretty while doing it. I shall take a whole pie — nay, as many of them as I can drag off the counter. Of course I cannot eat them, but I can keep them and turn them over and count them. Ha, the joy of it! hoarding pies which are spoiling for the want of eating!

Of course, if I should meet my fellow-creatures in what I am pleased to call society, I should not think of trying to get all the pie on the table. I should be courteous and considerate there, and should feel extremely uncomfortable if I should even seem to try to get more than my share of pie or any

other good thing; but such social amenities are mere relaxations from the serious business of life. They could not satisfy the heart as the pretty scramble at the pie counter does.

If I can find no other use for my pies, I shall bribe men with some of them to help me to get more. Then my pile of pies will increase the faster, and the pies down at the lower end of the counter will begin to become scarce, and hungry fellows will scramble for them in a way that will stimulate me by the force of example and keep me from forgetting, as I might otherwise do, that a pie is, after all, a very good thing. For if I eat pie, and handle pie, and smell pie, and see nothing but pie, and dream of nothing but pie, and read of nothing at a breakfast of pie except pie, I shall need the stimulus of other men's example to keep my gorge from rising at the thought of pie.

If it rise in spite of me and I throw away in disgust all the pie I do not really need, what then? Ah, what then, indeed!

The other heavy pie-owners will not be likely to follow my example, and therefore the strenuousness of the struggle at the lower end of the counter will not relax, and the sight of this struggle among men who are really hungry for pie will keep the heavy owners constantly reminded of the value of pie; and thus, the grabbing will go merrily on. All of my discarded pies will be quickly appropriated by men who will not need them, and when I become normally hungry myself, as I presently shall, I shall be unable to find either my pies or my place at the counter. Therefore, I shall not be so foolish as to give up my place at the pie counter. If I must choose between starvation and surfeit, I shall choose the latter. I am not responsible for the present competitive system at the world's pie counter, and though I may perceive the mockery of it all and the terribleness of it all, I do not wish to starve.

When my pile of pies grows so appallingly large as to shut out all hope of any of the

really precious things of life, I shall take a few pies off the top of the pile and build a university with them in which men shall be taught the language of Atlantis and how to get pies.

If, in spite of this, I notice between my grabs for more pies a slight hiatus in my satisfaction and happiness which might be filled by something not to be found in a pie shop, — something which the present pie-grabbing system does not encourage, something which always did and always will satisfy the heart, — I shall grab the harder. When my heart calls for love, I shall give it pie. That will be both logical and effective. Who has not noticed how effective it is?

If I do not make mere money-making my profession, — if I choose a trade, or agriculture, or one of the liberal arts or learned professions, — I must still do the most strenuous work of my life at the pie counter. Whether I choose carpentering or preaching, the skill and energy which I shall employ in

the practice of my calling will be as nothing to that which I shall be compelled to employ in order to get some other man's opportunity to practise it at all, and to get pies by so doing. Whatever my vocation may be, I must follow it, not for the love of humanity, but as a means of enabling me to get the biggest possible piece of pie; and my success in that vocation will be measured, not by the good I shall do, but by the number of pies I shall be able to get.

But suppose this should not satisfy my heart, — and I begin to suspect that it would not, — where shall I look for that satisfaction which is the source and foundation of all other satisfaction? If I cannot stifle the longing to love and be loved, how shall I satisfy that longing?

I might love my fellow-men. Ah, but that would be perilous to my success at the pie counter. How could I trample on my fellow-beings there if I loved them? And if I did not trample on them and get the best of

them, what pleasure would the struggle for pies afford me?

Imagine people at the pie counter of the world loving one another as the members of an ideal family love one another! Imagine them waiting politely for their turns to be served! Imagine them regarding it a pleasure to assist their fellows to get pies! Imagine them leaving the table when they have had enough! Imagine them not being so abnormal as to stuff their pockets with pies which they cannot possibly eat or put to any other sane use! That would not be "business."

Then, shall I be able to love those who will show by their fierce struggle against me that they do not love me — whose hands will be raised against me even as my hand will be raised against them?

Up at the prosperous end of the counter I may find that my competitors will carry about with them what a certain distinguished Professor at a certain famous Breakfast Table

calls an atmosphere of grace, mercy, and peace, at least six feet in radius. While I am within the narrow limits of that atmosphere, I may feel that I am the object of my fellow-creature's good-will. For this brief moment the weapons of warfare will be sheathed, and we shall feel something of the fraternal love which we might, under other conditions, feel and practise at all times. When we meet at the well-ordered table, and hear the ready footfall of trim servants, and fall under the spell of luxurious surroundings, I shall, for some two hours, forget that we have spent our lives in trying to snatch from one another that pie which we now so gladly share. I shall, for these two hours, forget that on the morrow these hands, which give the hearty welcome and the parting clasp, will be engaged in snatching pie from mine. For these two hours I may love my fellow-man.

But if I go down to the lower end of the counter where the brutality of the struggle

is not softened by a halo of good feeling even six feet in radius, shall I be able to love the fellow-men whom I shall find there?

I shall find many men there whose hearts are as large and as warm and as true as any that I shall find anywhere in this world, but I shall find others who are there only because they are less cunning than I, and not at all because they are less selfish. When I read the coarseness of their natures in the coarseness of their lives, and the hardness of their hearts in the harsh lines of their faces, and their hatred of me in the cold gleam in their eyes, shall I love them? When I hear some of the noisiest of them curse me to my face as the author of a system which they as well as I practise; when I hear them preach a doctrine of fire and blood and hate and murder, unsoftened by any trace or semblance of love for any living creature, shall I fall upon their necks and love them? No! I shall slink shudderingly back to the suffocating atmos-

phere of my pile of pies where men at least know how to mask their warfare with a show of breeding; but I shall not satisfy my heart there, nor anywhere else at the pie counter of the world. There can no longer be any doubt about that.

Where, then, shall I seek this satisfaction? Some say they find it in religion.

Here the Lonely Man paused and smiled wearily. While he had been musing on the melancholy struggle for existence, he had been vaguely aware of a large subject that loomed indistinctly out beyond the horizon of clear consciousness, in the direction in which his thoughts had seemed to be drifting. He had hoped that this subject would be cheerful. It had turned out to be religion; and, as he recalled his childhood struggle with the Shorter Catechism, The Pilgrim's Progress, Fox's Book of Martyrs, and the Book of Judges, he could not conscientiously say that it always is cheerful.

Then, it generally has a most inconvenient way of requiring a person to carry about with him two minds, — one for religious thinking and the other for the practical affairs of life; and since both minds are housed in the same skull, when religion slips into the house without knocking it is as likely to stumble against one tenant as the other. If the worldly host should happen to be the one to greet the religious guest, some startling things are likely to happen.

The Lonely Man was, in his own way, religious, and he had the greatest liking for many people who were religious in their way, although their way was generally not his. He had an abiding faith in the ultimate realization of universal love, and this had always seemed to him to be the essence of any religion worth considering; and it had seemed, in a more or less indefinite way, to imply an eternal continuity of human existence, and something like a divine intelligence behind the phenomena of the universe.

But he had often wondered if he was not congenitally deficient in that duality of mind which enables a person to get along smoothly with the mysticism and supernaturalism of any orthodox religion, in this world of most intense naturalism.

He indistinctly recollected that in his most distant childhood he had, like a little atheist, taken the eternity of the universe for granted, till some one had told him that it could not possibly have been here if a Creator had not made it out of nothing and put it here, and that it would be extremely imprudent to entertain the slightest doubt on that point. Then he had immediately begun to wonder how the Creator could be here without having been made out of nothing and put here, and how he could make a universe out of nothing anyhow; and he had wondered more or less about it ever since, and had sometimes been impious enough to wonder if the mystery could not really be simplified — for little boys at least — by assuming that the divinity

and the manifestation of the material universe are co-eternal and have some common substance. He had never gone so far as to say that he really believed this to be true, but he was convinced that if such a theory would satisfy the requirements of a religion, it would be the safest possible theory to carry around in this matter-of-fact world, for it would need no protection from those obstinate things called facts, and might be kicked about all day with almost as little danger of being injured as if it were a fact itself.

However impossible of demonstration the truths of religion may be (he reflected), they appear to be equally impossible of refutation. Man, therefore, continues to be a religious animal, and since he must receive religion itself by faith, he opens the doors of faith so wide that many other things than the essentials of religion slip through the doorway and are as tenaciously held as the essence of religion itself.

Some indefinite but momentous truth suggested by hope, and more or less securely supported by observation and experience, slips into the mind, accompanied by a large assortment of more definite but less probable suppositions. The mind immediately clothes the truth with the materials of the less probable suppositions, and binds the clothes on so securely that the poor little truth can never get out to show its face without assistance, and would probably frighten its host if it did.

Now, if some bold iconoclast comes along and begins to take off these dead habiliments to see if perchance they may not conceal some living truth which would be the better for a breath or two of air, the possessor of the truth holds up his hands in horror, applies opprobrious epithets to the iconoclast, and will never be satisfied till he has coaxed his truth back into its winding-sheet and made a mummy of it again.

The early astronomers took off a part of the graveclothes of religion, and thereby got

themselves into their own, more 's the pity; but the sextons who had charge of religion's body had no difficulty in finding enough other shrouds to wrap up their truth again to the point of suffocation, and they wrapped it up and put it back into its vault. Some of these shrouds were torn off from time to time, but they were easily replaced with others, till Darwin came along and unwound the grave-clothes almost to the body of the truth itself and frightened some of the sextons clean out of the cemetery. Some of those who remained, however, after trying in vain to put back the clothes which Darwin had taken off, gave up the attempt and busied themselves with the wrappings which he had left. They presently succeeded in making a very respectable mummy of their truth again.

Darwin really left only one shroud on religion, and that is the miraculous origin of life. Now, some clever fellow will sooner or later come along and take off this shroud by proving that living organisms have origi-

nated from the operation of purely natural forces on what we are accustomed to regard dead matter, and then, at last, the body of religious truth will stalk forth with more vigor than it ever showed in the past, and we shall wonder why we ever feared to let it show itself before.

In my poor opinion it would be just as well to become accustomed to this shock before it comes. If we do not, a great many very good and very pious people, finding the last rag of superstition torn from religion, will foolishly decide that the truths of religion themselves have been destroyed, and will turn into the hopeless byways of atheism, without taking the trouble to observe that a natural divinity may be just as infinite, just as eternal, just as divine, and just as satisfactory in every way, as a supernatural divinity; that a natural immortality would be just as welcome as a miraculous immortality; and that a natural love (the essence of religion) is really a more reasonable thing than a su-

pernatural love, which is apt to float so far beyond the clouds as to be rather chilly when it comes back to earth again.

Now, if some of those amiable gentlemen who compose the theological profession could know what I am thinking to-night, some of them might be inclined to ignore my fancies as the improbable dreams of a mildly delirious lunatic. Others might take a more serious view of them, and advise a restriction of my liberty; and the rest would probably be frank enough to admit that their own faith had been looking over the hedge of orthodoxy into the heretical field in which my own imagination has been stumbling around. For ministers are really not bad fellows. They have done a vast amount of good in the world, much of which has been overlooked on account of some of their blunders, — blunders which were the result of the universal ignorance of mankind, for which no one in particular appears to have been responsible. If Cotton Mather delivered a few witches over to the

Devil, it was, after all, Justice Sewall who hanged them. It is therefore unreasonable to saddle the whole blame upon the clergymen, — although candor compels the admission that Sewall had studied theology before he studied law, — and it is not fair to forget that clergymen have smoothed the pathway of many a poor wretch to the limitless unknown and kept the prop of faith under an important body of possible truths that could in the nature of things have no better support, some of which may, in some future age, have a foundation of scientific proof built under them.

While they have been doing this, they have been the victims of a vast amount of exasperating prodding by irreverent laymen, which prodding they have generally borne remarkably well.

Now, if one of these long-suffering clergymen should happen in to-night and say, "My dear sir, if you take away supernaturalism you will destroy religion," I should reply,

"I have not had the honor of taking away any of it, but it is nevertheless disappearing like frost in a July sun, and religion is not being destroyed.

"Supernaturalism is nothing but the garments in which the essential truths of religion have been clothed — and disguised. When these garments become too old-fashioned to be longer tolerated, some one will take them off, one by one, and you must not ask what they will be replaced with. It may not be necessary to replace them at all. Truth has a robust constitution, and can go about naked without any danger of catching cold.

"A good many of these garments have already been stripped off, and it would be wearisome to repeat the names of all those intrepid fellows who have done the stripping; but you will admit that the essentials of religion have not suffered by the process. Nothing has suffered, in fact, except the geology, astronomy, and biology of the Old Testa-

ment, and the pathology and therapeutics of the New.

"These things are not religion, but by clinging as you do to the only rag of supernaturalism that is left, you make it appear that these things are religion, and thus pave an easy road to atheism for those who see these things disappearing.

"Whether we are supernaturalists or not, to any one who will open his eyes it looks reasonable to believe that there is a divinity in the universe, for the meanest man that was ever hanged had something good, something divine, about him; and the existence of this divinity is rendered no more real by attributing it to a supernatural source.

"That intelligence or something superior to intelligence rules the universe seems probable, for the intelligence of man would not enable him to construct a world or a solar system or a Milky Way, even if he had the materials. It would not enable him to construct out of the materials at hand a human

intelligence, and it does not, even after centuries of discipline by the divinity of Nature, enable him to form any conception of a form of activity that may be as much higher than man's intelligence as his own intelligence is higher than the mechanical movements of a watch. He must, forsooth, attribute a magnified form of his own intelligence to his Deity, as if there could be no form of activity so high that mere intelligence, however magnified, may constitute the merest fragment of it.

"Here is the suggestion of divinity enough for any reasonable man, and do you really pay a very great compliment to this divinity when you assume that the existence of any divinity is so incredible that we must turn our minds topsy-turvy and inside out in order to be in a position to believe in it? This you certainly do when you insist that the existence of a divinity necessarily implies the conversion of nothing into something, a long string of miracles, and the reversal of

the laws of Nature — which are an expression of the divine will — in each and every one of the instances of divine inspiration that have appeared in the world from the time of Gautama Buddha down to Shakespeare.

"Perhaps you think that I, being a layman, have no right to have any views on the subject of theology; but as a genial New England doctor, named Holmes, once said, I have been taking fifty-two lectures a year during the greater part of my life, from orthodox teachers of theology, and unless my instructors have been utterly incompetent, I should now be familiar enough with the subject to be entitled to an opinion on it. If, in view of this long course of instruction, you attach enough importance to my opinion to ask me how I can prove the existence of a natural divinity, I shall admit that I cannot do it as I can prove one of Euclid's propositions, — if I have not forgotten my geometry, — for I have not been instructed to look for a natural divinity. But I insist

that in the present state of knowledge, the existence of such a divinity cannot be disproved, and that every advance of knowledge has rendered it more probable.

"I ask you if you can say as much for your non-natural divinity, the proof of whose existence consists, by your own frequent and emphatic admissions, in the denial of the permanence of the universe and the uniformity of Nature, — both of which are being rendered more and more undeniable by science and philosophy, and really constitute the only satisfactory evidence of divinity that we have.

"Can you explain why a derangement of Nature in the form of an incredible miracle is evidence of a better kind of omnipotence than that to the existence of which the obvious orderliness of Nature testifies?

"Do you ask how life got into the world? I do not know. Does supernaturalism explain how life got into the world? It only tells us it did get into the world, which is

more than it can prove; for we only know that life is here, and do not know at all that it was not always here.

"Are we at all certain that the line which we have drawn between living things and dead things is a valid boundary, and that it really separates these two classes of things any more than our arbitrary classification of vegetables and animals separates them?

"Does man really possess any property or attribute that is not vaguely shadowed forth in those forms of matter which we call dead?

"Does man have a definite, complex figure? So does a piece of lime, but its figure is less definite and less complex than that of man.

"Does man's body execute definite and complex movements? So does a piece of lime, but the movements which it executes are less definite and less complex than those of a man.

"Does the substance of a man's body undergo changes which are definite and com-

plex? So does the substance of a piece of lime, but the changes which its substance undergoes are less definite and less complex.

"Man has no physical or chemical property that does not exist in some simple and indefinite form in the inorganic world. Of course, physical and chemical properties are not vital, but when we follow them from man down through simpler and simpler forms of living beings and on into the inorganic world, and when we see how those properties which are vital lose in definiteness and complexity in the same gradual way as we descend from man to the lowest living beings, — are we certain that these vital properties really cease to exist where they seem to vanish?

"Sensibility, motility, assimilation, and reproduction are the four chief vital properties. When we examine them we shall find that the definiteness and the complexity of their manifestation gradually fade away as we descend to lower and lower orders of living

beings; and when we reach the amœba, whose whole body is a single cell, and is all brain, all stomach, all legs, and all a reproductive apparatus, we shall hardly be able to realize that the life which this cell has is a simple, indefinite manifestation of exactly the same kind of life as that which man has; yet there is no difference between the life of a man and that of the amœba, except a difference of degree. The assimilation, mentality (or sensibility), motility, and reproduction of the amœba are the same vital characteristics as those of man.

"Now, is there a less gap between the birth of a child and that of a single cell than there is between the birth of the latter and that of a crystal of snow?

"Is it further from the motility of a single cell to the movement of a magnetic needle than it is from the violin playing of a Beethoven to the movement of the cell?

"If the turning of a leaf toward the light reveals in the leaf a mentality which is merely

a vastly remote analogue of the mentality of man, do not the chemical affinities of carbon, phosphorus, and oxygen reveal in them something that is merely a vastly remote analogue of the mentality of the leaf?

"If the vast difference between man and the single cell is a mere difference of degree, how do we know that the difference between the living cell and a grain of gunpowder is one of kind?

"And now, if the most daring effort of my imagination cannot awaken in your mind the faintest suspicion of life in inorganic matter, please do not regard your unbelief an offence to me, for you will notice that I have not said that I myself believe the thing to which my questions point."

Here the Lonely Man smoked thoughtfully for a few moments as if he were pondering whether to follow out his present train of thoughts to their logical conclusion. He quickly decided that he had already gone too

far to retreat, and that it would be more interesting to go on.

If I should ask a scientific materialist, who believes in nothing but matter and motion, whether there is the slightest reason to believe that there is anything akin to life in inorganic matter, he would doubtless say, without the least hesitation, that there is not. If I should ask him whether there is life in the substance of an amœba, he would say that there is, although the substance of the amœba's body consists of exactly the same elements as those which abound in the inorganic world. If I should ask him why the matter in the amœba's body is alive, while the same matter in the inorganic world is dead, he would say that in the former case the matter is organized, while in the latter case it is not.

Thus the only thing that distinguishes living matter from dead matter is organization; yet the organization of the amœba is

not the "state of being furnished with organs," for the amœba, being a single cell, has no organs. Its organization is nothing but definiteness and complexity of structure.

The more definite and complex the structure of any organism is, the higher is the type of that organism's life. Thus, the life of a fish is vastly higher than that of an amœba, for the fish consists of billions of cells, each one of which is as complex as the amœba's whole body; and in the fish these cells are differentiated into hundreds of definite organs and structures. The life of man is the highest type of life that we know, for man's organization is more definite and complex than that of any other known creature. His mentality is, therefore, higher than that of any other known creature, for mentality is one of the vital phenomena, and obeys the same law that fixes the plane of the other vital phenomena. They are all highest in the most highly organized creatures, and lowest in the simplest creatures.

Now (mused the Lonely Man) a biologist would not deny any of these propositions. He might wish to word them differently. Instead of "definiteness and complexity of structure," he might wish to say "definite, coherent heterogeneity," but these words mean practically the same thing and they hurt one's brain. The words which I have chosen are bad enough.

Now, since the plane of an organism's mentality is fixed by the definiteness and complexity of that organism's structure, we should expect beings more highly organized than man to have mentality of a higher type than man's mentality. If these beings were as much more highly organized than man as man is more highly organized than an amœba, we should expect their mentality to be as much higher than man's as his is higher than the faint mentality of a single cell. Again, as the appearance of man is wholly different from that of an amœba or a tubercle bacillus, we should expect beings vastly superior to

man to be vastly different from him in appearance.

Now I begin to see whither my thoughts are leading me. The thinking has been rather hard, but the result of it will be interesting.

Thus far we have kept to known facts. Now I must create in my imagination some beings that are as much more highly organized than man as man is more highly organized than a mushroom. Necessarily, their mentality will be as much higher than man's as his is higher than the mentality of the mushroom. Since I must put these remarkable beings somewhere, I will suppose them to be in Mars. My scientific materialist might decline to make such a supposition, for science has, apparently, never been able to colonize Mars. This can be done only by imagination — which has done it with an incredible variety of colonists. Therefore, I may put a few colonists there on my own account.

Now, if these denizens of Mars were as much superior to man as I have supposed them to be, they would, of course, be as different from man as he is different from a mushroom. But they are not there, or if they are, we do not know it and cannot find it out; so what is the use of making the supposition?

There is this use: the momentary presence in Mars of these strange creatures of my imagination has enabled me to make a comparison that would have been impossible without their help; and they cannot vanish from their Martial abode without, at least, leaving the planet behind. They cannot take it away with them; and what shall be said of a being so colossal in its proportions and so vast in its complexity that the whole planet of Mars is a single atom in its body; and Jupiter and the Earth and the other planets, other atoms; and the whole solar system, a single molecule; and our whole sidereal system with its countless constellations, a single cell; and the other stellar

systems that can be reached by the telescope, other cells; not to mention the systems and systems of systems that the most powerful telescope never has reached and never will reach, the existence of which the boldest astronomer would hesitate to deny?

This looks no more like a man than a man looks like a mushroom, but who can deny that it — the whole universe — is an organism? Who can deny that it is a living organism? Do we know of any other organism in which the signs of life are more apparent? In what other organism are the functions performed with such mathematical precision, with such incredible swiftness, and on so sublime a scale? Is it not so much more perfectly and highly organized than man, and so staggeringly vast in its proportions and infinite in its complexity, that, on our own premises, we must admit that its mentality is so much higher than man's that the difference between a man and an amœba fades, by contrast, into equality?

If we will not admit it, how shall we extricate ourselves from the logical tangle into which we have fallen? And if we cannot extricate ourselves, how can we show that the part of a living whole is dead? How can the matter of a living universe be dead matter?

Do I myself believe the conclusion at which I have apparently arrived? (mused the Lonely Man). Belief is a large word, and I would certainly have no one put to torture for not believing this theory, — or fancy, if that is a better word, — but it seems more plausible each time my thoughts recur to it, and it seems, on the one hand, to be invulnerable to the assaults of the materialist, and on the other hand, it does not seem to be irreverent. How can the materialist deny that mentality, or something analogous to it, is a universal attribute of organisms, and how can it be more irreverent to assume that the infinite material universe is, in a real and logical sense, the material aspect of an infinite

divinity than it is to make the same assumption in the mystical phraseology of theology as we now do?

If the philosopher insists that that through which all things exist is unknowable, he might do so even with this fancy as a working hypothesis; for who knows, or can know, the universe? But those philosophers who have most nearly exhausted the subtleties of language to prove that the Absolute is absolutely unknowable have invariably ended with either a tacit or an open admission that we do actually know something about it. Therefore, it is not absolutely unknowable, and it does not seem presumptuous to say that the Unknowable suggested by my fancy is a more natural, tangible, familiar sort of Unknowable than the one that lurks behind the fine-spun web of Mr. Mansel's philosophy.

But the important question is: Could I satisfy my heart by loving such a divinity?

I could, at least, satisfy my reason, and the satisfaction of reason is an important step

toward satisfying the heart. It would, at all events, be more satisfactory to love a divinity that has some natural, credible relationship to man than one that is wholly beyond and outside the infinite natural universe to which man belongs. If the love of a natural divinity would not satisfy the human heart, the descent of our affection from such a being to mankind would seem more rational and less violent than the descent from an impossible Deity that has no natural or logical point of contact with anything so mundane as mankind; but I begin to perceive that neither the love of the mystical Deity which theology offers us nor the love of the Absolute which is offered by philosophy can satisfy the heart of man.

Man must love something on his own plane of being — something of which he can form some conception and with which he can feel some sympathy. If my fancy points in the direction of the truth, the love of man would be, in a real sense, the love of a frag-

ment of the universal divinity — as great a fragment as the infinitesimal capacity of man would enable him to bring within the radius of his most expanded love, and several million times greater than that which he actually does love in any true sense. For how can we delude ourselves into believing that that is love for which a brother or a sister, a husband or a wife, would not care a rap? And what brother or sister or husband or wife would care a rap for a love whose chief expression is hostile competition? The question is not whether hostile competition is right or necessary, but whether it reveals and begets love; and I submit that it does not.

Do we say that man as he is, is so unlovely that we cannot love him, and that we must, therefore, idealize and magnify his best traits, and then love the resulting magnified idealization as a god? That is, perhaps, what the best of us unconsciously do in the name of religion; but it is, on the one hand, irreverent, for this idealization is not God, and it

is, on the other hand, irrational, and leads swiftly to a mysticism that leaves us nothing to love but a bundle of verbal subtleties and contradictions, out of which the most astute philosopher can liberate no meaning, and the most earnest theologian no warmth. This can never satisfy the human heart, and this, I fear, is the bulk of what religion gives us on this side of the grave.

Does it offer more? Aye; but has it given more? If it has taught man really to love his fellow-man, how has he so thoroughly unlearned the lesson that he now regards his fellow-man his legitimate prey, and fears him as his worst enemy, except in the presence of a police force or in the shadow of an army? And why is it that those armies which are most efficient in butchery are those which have originated where the noblest existing religion has been longest taught?

Religion cannot be destroyed till the universe has been destroyed and the divinity of the universe has ceased to reveal itself through

the genius of man, whether it be the genius of a Hebrew prophet or of an English poet; but it cannot satisfy human hearts till its truths have been in some measure stripped of their gauzy mysticism and brought to earth. So concrete a thing as a human heart must love a thing of flesh and blood, and if we cannot love man as he is, and must perforce idealize, why may we not idealize the *imperfections out* of the humanity that is, and then love that, rather than idealize perfections into a humanity that is not, and then try to love that? The real side of humanity might be improved by the process, and the ideal side would not have the monopoly of our affection which it now appears to have.

This seems to be the goal toward which religion, science, philosophy, and politics are slowly groping, and in some thousands of years the goal may be reached, but it is conceivable that with our voluntary aid it might be reached some thousands of years sooner.

When it shall have been reached, the heart of man may be satisfied.

If we passively wait for the realization of this dream we shall wait long, and neither the struggle for bread nor the scramble for gold nor the murmuring of prayers will greatly alleviate the dreariness of waiting. But let us not be disheartened: let us not too hastily decide that there is nothing that can in any degree satisfy the heart while we wait. There are more things than banks and churches in the world: there is the justice of the peace, forsooth, and he can marry us.

Here is the promise of a joy so sweet that one's whole being thrills with pleasure at the thought of it. This promise comes when fortune favors us, and gives a rich intensity to all our other joys. It comes in times of gloom and sadness and gently mitigates our sorrow. It hovers on the outskirts of our consciousness in loneliness and redeems our moods from utter dulness. It bids us persevere when constant disappointment attends

our efforts to win wealth or fame. It cheers us when the bubble bursts within our hands after we have won it, and makes us try again. It comes when grim despair has bidden us to curse the world and die, and stays our hand and lures us on to meet defeat again.

I know not what joy the hope of being loved by one man brings to a woman's heart, for my ignorance of her heart is boundless; but the hope of being loved, or the belief that one is loved, by some fair woman, is the thing that gives the gladness to all the men that have glad hearts. This sweet, seductive hope is that which lies beneath the tragedy — or comedy — of life, and gives a man the courage to play his part in it. It is this that sends him out to war against his fellows and beguiles him into church to pray; it is this that makes the world seem, in spite of all the savage cruelty there is within it, a delightful place; it is this that makes life seem, in spite of all its vapid emptiness, a glorious thing. A man may scoff bravely at the love

of woman, but in his secret soul he knows this is the main thing in his life.

So, then, let us not become despondent. We have the promise of this love. Our instinct plants the promise in our hearts and will never let it die. We feel it tingling in our veins in early youth; we feel it straining at our wills in later years to swerve us from the course of life we have mapped out; we feel it leaping in our hearts when our superhuman efforts to achieve a dear success have brought the prize within our reach; we see it in the amorous glance of half-veiled eyes and in the modest blushes of coy cheeks; it whispers to us in the rustle of a silken skirt; it is this that murmurs softly to us in the dreamy measures of a waltz, — this promise of a woman's love.

So let us scoff at the universal love of human beings for all their fellow-beings. Let us call it a sweet, Utopian dream that will never be fulfilled, and let us do nothing to hasten its advent. Let us love, of course,

but let us fix our hot affection on one fellow-being of the other sex and put our knife to the throats of other fellow-beings to make that one happy. Though we may not make a flower garden of the world, we may have a little garden of our own with one sweet rose in it — and a barbed-wire fence around it. And if we fear the thorns that often lurk beneath the petals of the rose, and therefore never have a garden of our own, we may lean upon our neighbor's barbed-wire fence and inhale the fragrance of his rose. The roses seem to like it; but let us not forget that barbs are often quite as sharp as thorns.

So do not worry about the love of humanity in general. Claim the sweet fulfilment of the promise which instinct gives you, and love a woman. Do not think the promise is a mere enticing mockery. What does it matter that the pretty schoolmate who, in the distant past, blushingly confessed her love to you behind the lilac bush, and passed the touching little messages of love to you be-

tween the pages of her spelling book, and sobbed out her assurances of eternal constancy to you when at last you went out into the world to seek your fortune, — was married to another wretch within a year? She was a girl. Love a woman.

You saw, yourself, that it really did not matter, after you had met the sister of your friend's wife. When you fell under the spell of her brown eyes and black hair and slender figure, you perceived that you had never really loved before. Her silvery voice gave utterance to the first real melody in a woman's soul that you had ever heard. Were you not thankful then that you had escaped the simple little schoolmate? This was no sentimental little rustic; this was a splendid woman who had had the constant, watchful care of fond parents, the accomplishments which wealth alone can give one, and was worthy of a prince's love. She heard love's message for the first time when she heard it from your lips. Her glad surprise showed

you how new the message was and how sweet. There was no feigning here. The joy that glistened in her averted eyes was the real joy that cannot be counterfeited. It was the kind of joy that tingles through a woman's nerves, and quivers in her breath, and sets its blushing stamp upon her face and neck before the quickest tongue can frame a sentence. It was the kind of joy that has Nature's guarantee of genuineness, and makes a sudden paradise of the world and a poem of two lives. Even after all these years you will admit that this woman loved you — then, and for one blissful month thereafter.

At first, when things began to change, the explanations of her absence when she expected you seemed plausible. There was the sudden call to a sick grandmother, — she *was* her grandmother's favorite. There was her unexpected delay with her sister at the missionary society, — her sister really was away that evening. There was another unexpected delay with her sister's husband,

—and then unlucky chance disclosed the fact that her sister's husband had spent that evening at his office, while your sweetheart spent the evening in the park with some one else; and then your fond heart grew suspicious. A rival whom you did not know had come along and reaped the harvest you had sown. The lips that you had taught to kiss kissed his. The soul in which you wakened into life the symphony of love now played this symphony in his. The breast that you had taught to throb with love now throbbed with love on his.

But do not, I pray you, grow despondent. This woman had been too long shielded from temptation, and when temptation came she yielded. Who was it that said, "The virtue that requires a constant guard is hardly worth the sentinel"? He told the truth. Go, seek out a woman who has been thrown, without a chaperon, into the fiery furnace of temptation which we call the world, and yet has stood the test. You will think you find

her, and whether her eyes are of one color or another, whether the fair possessor is plump and jolly or slender and grave, whether she still has the beauty of ripe maturity to win or is already regretting the loss of her ancient prettiness, — the symphony which she will play in your soul and the poetry which she will write in your life will be the same, if the fair creature can awaken them at all; and in some cases she will play the same symphony with only a faint discord here and there, and inject the same poetry into the world all through one's life, till the gray hairs come and the eyes grow dim and one totters into one's grave with the pleasing conviction that it has been a good thing to live.

If she can do this for you, what matters it that she may have done it for a dozen others? Sly dogs who think they know the world will tell you that she has, and that you are a fool to love her; but, mark you, you are no greater fool than they will be if they ever fall in love. He who has never known

the bliss of being a fool has never been in love. I have been, but though I am not so great a fool as he who seeks to regulate the conduct of other fools in love, I may advise you to let sleeping dogs lie. Where you have no suspicions let no other man awaken them. Remember that if it is ever true that "nothing is but thinking makes it so," it is true in love; and remember that though a woman were as chaste as Diana she could not prove her virtue.

There are some cynics who tell us that the love between a man and a woman never lasts, but this is false. Sometimes the pretty dream is dreamed out to the end without a nightmare: the poetry runs smoothly on through an enchanted world; the symphony plays sweetly on in an enchanted heart till the end of life is reached. I know, for I have seen; but, alas, I have not seen this very often. Oftener have I had reason to suspect that the symphony had died out, and the heart-strings had become covered with

dust or were being clandestinely played by an unseen and forbidden hand.

So, when one feels that one is coming under the influence that has power to awaken this music in the soul and write this poetry in the world, how shall one know that this is the kind of music that will last? How shall one know that the player will not lose her cunning or the instrument its tone? The first strains are indistinguishable from the kind that does last — and from the kind that does not. Shall we say that the love that dies was never love? Ah, we do not say it till it dies. We thought it was love, till its decay convinced us that it was not. It is a timid diagnostician who never makes a diagnosis except at an autopsy. Then, sometimes, when a surfeited heart has had a long rest or a change of surroundings, the old love comes to life again and we change our minds again and say it was love after all. Here is a mystery; a mystery which, it is true, may often be solved by showing that the decay of

love was due to some one's stupid selfishness, but often it cannot be solved at all. We must put it back upon the mental shelf on which we keep the other mysteries that have to do with woman.

There are many of these mysteries. Her intellect is one of them. That she has an intellect there is no longer any doubt, but there is still some difference of opinion as to the relative capability of her intellect and that of her brother. Whatever the solution of this question may be, woman's intellect is different from man's. At least, it has seemed so to me. When I have told her that I have had four great-grandfathers, she has almost always asked me if my mother married twice. When I have assured her that there have been no second marriages among my ancestors so far as history records their misdeeds, she has looked upon me with suspicion as an eccentric person who has chosen a needlessly complicated method of getting into the world and may cause trouble before getting out of

it. When I have told her at noon on Monday that in ten days I should leave town, she has invariably counted the days on her fingers and decided that I should go at noon on Wednesday of the next week. When I have, in the deep humiliation resulting from her apparently needless haste to get rid of me, assured her that I had not intended to go till Thursday, she has counted her pretty fingers again, saying, "To-day is one day," and found again that she had exactly fingers (and thumbs) enough to reach to noon on the second following Wednesday. In these intellectual encounters I have invariably been compelled to retire with a badly damaged reputation for arithmetical acumen.

Then when I have asked her how old I was when I was half as old as my brother, if, ten years later, my age was two-thirds of his, she has innocently asked me how old my brother was at that time. When I have told her that boys and girls in short nether garments are solving such problems as that

in the schools without knowing how old the brother was, she has faintly remembered something of the sort in her own school experience, but has said that she never did like puzzles and does not consider them practical. She may even have intimated that age is rather too delicate a subject to discuss with a lady, anyhow.

Now, in the mind of a fairly intelligent man the statement of the problem immediately resolves itself into

$$x + 10 = \tfrac{2}{3}(2x + 10),$$

whence, by the swift compulsion of inexorable logic, without any aid from teachers or any guidance from books, the male mind is forced to the conclusion that this important period in my life was a good while ago; namely, when I was exactly ten years old.

The educated male mind can work with swift precision in a groove of logic which leads by only one possible route to only one possible conclusion. It may ascend into previously unexplored regions, but it must be

pushed by logic up the syllogistic stairway from one premise to the next. Where a step is out or where there is a parting of the ways, it is more likely to go wrong than not. It must have the compulsion of necessity or the guidance of extreme probability or it will go wrong.

Now, compulsion is exactly what my sister's intellect does not like. Give her a problem to the solution of which there is no clearly defined road — a problem to which there are seven thousand possible answers only one of which can be correct, and her agile mind will balance itself for its flight into the unknown, as a meadow lark on the fence that separates the beaten road from the trackless meadow balances itself first on one foot and then on the other, and sings out to you, "My nest is in the meadow. You cannot see it, but do you think I cannot find it? The grass is tall, and there are no pathways through the air, but am I not a meadow lark?" Then, after performing a few gyra-

tions before your bewildered eyes and turning back to laugh at your dulness, it sweeps with unerring precision to its nest.

While woman's intellect does not absolutely refuse to work in the logical groove, it has seemed to me that it dislikes to do so, preferring to solve those problems which must be solved as the meadow lark finds its nest; and with her newly liberated intellect she has solved full many a problem in the unmapped realms of thought while the clumsy intellect of man has been looking around for a path.

Some of the sweetest and truest poetry that has ever been written has, according to my dull judgment, been written by a woman whose name I will not even think, lest I suspect myself of indulging in fulsome flattery, which I never do. When we see these truths in their beautiful habiliments of words we can see that they are true, but we could never have found them ourselves.

But are we always certain when this intellect of our fair sister swoops from the

dizzy heights which we cannot attain, into a bewildering maze of thought whither we cannot follow, that it always really goes anywhere or finds anything when it gets there? I have read books (the names of which it is needless to think) which, to me, were as hopelessly incoherent and senseless as the jabbering of a man who is recovering from the effects of ether; while to many a woman whom I have known there was in each mystical sentence in these books a perfectly lucid meaning. It is comforting to know that to some of my sisters the apostles of mysticism are as incomprehensible as they are to me; but it is discouraging to know that to some of my brothers — actual men with whiskers — such writers are as intelligible as they are to my specially initiated sisters.

I have sought out my sister — the one who understands occult things — and humbly craved her assistance in my effort to understand them. She has tried to reduce the subtle meanings of her favorite authors to

language of a simplicity commensurate with that of the coarse machinery of my dull brain, but she has failed. I have at times been inspired with the hope that I should presently understand, but just as my exhausted intellect has trembled on the threshold of the occult world to which she would fain have introduced me, I have suddenly become conscious of — nothing but the figures on the carpet and the pictures on the wall and the other familiar things in the prosaic world in which I live.

Did I say prosaic world? It will never be a prosaic world to me, my dear sister, so long as you are in it. It may be that mystery is an intellectual necessity to man, but shall I despair of finding this mystery because the occultism of the Orient is a closed book to me, because I cannot read Hegel after he tells me that being and not being are the same, because absent treatment has no effect on me, and because the rites of my secret society are cheap humbugs which any school-

boy could see through? Shall I despair of finding mystery because all through the alluring realm of modern geometry — in which parallel lines meet at infinity or anywhere else one chooses to make them meet, in which the three angles of a triangle may be either greater or less than two right angles, in which space may be round or oval or of the shape of a saddle and have as many dimensions as one pleases to give it — my imagination, as it struggles to follow Riemann and Helmholtz, is pursued by the dull conviction that an axiom does not require a proof and that Euclid's twelfth axiom is correct whether it can be proved or not?

No, I shall not despair, for so long as woman is in the world there will be a mystery great enough for me, a real mystery which lures my baffled understanding to renewed attempts at its solution after each defeat. I have studied this mystery in the dull routine of daily life; I have studied it in the gayety of the ballroom; I have studied

it in the sacred presence of the other mystery of birth; I have studied it in the solemn presence of the final mystery of death. It has mocked me from the depths of laughing eyes; it has frowned at me from eyes that never laugh; it has leered at me from painted faces in the street at night when no policeman was in sight; and once in such a face I thought it had almost revealed itself.

Something in that face seemed to say, "The honored wife upon the boulevard and I are sisters. We wear man's yoke — I for an hour, she for life; and neither of us loves him. Our vanity must first be gratified, and then we must be fed. My sister in the office and the marts of trade has cast aside man's yoke and donned his armor, and now she hates him while she fights him. What would you have, fool? Do you expect to find love in the brothel or the home, when there is none in the world? The world is made of homes and brothels. How

can there be more in the parts than in the whole? *We must be fed. Ha, ha! We must be fed.*"

How much of truth there was in what that painted face revealed I do not know. I cannot think it was the whole truth. I have seen homes in which the love was real and undisguised, and sometimes my fancy paints a world in which it might be so in every case, but it is not the world I find about me; and so, to-night, I do not know how much of satisfaction the heart of man may find in woman's love.

And the heart of woman? How shall it be satisfied? Ah, her heart is the most inscrutable part of the whole enigma. I am not certain that, in this present world, it can be satisfied at all.

Of late years she has got into the habit of thinking, or appearing to think, that the scramble at the pie counter is the most satisfying thing in life, and you will find her there in numbers that are continually increas-

ing. You will find her competing as merrily with her brothers as they compete with each other. You will find the struggle none the less fierce because of her presence. You will find her paying the same price in work for a smaller piece of pie than her brother is willing to take. You will find her clamoring for more places at the world's pie counter, and you will find her getting them. You will find barriers going down, under protest at first and without protest at last, for the struggle for pie presently leaves no breath for protest.

Everywhere gentle woman, who was once the subject of painters, the theme of poets, the mother of children, the inspiration of men, — who was once the one lovely feature of a world otherwise brutalized by the struggle of man against man, — is elbowing her way into the struggling crowd, still further to intensify and embitter the strife and make this loveless world less lovely than it was before.

It may be that this is the final act in a tragedy of the race. God forbid that the curtain should ever go up on anything worse. It may be that this is the means whereby Nature will finally jolt the dull faculties of man into some realization of the essential brutality of the whole ghastly system of hostile competition. For if we shall know the millennium by the token of love, by that token we know that it does not lie in the direction of such competition.

Has such competition been the means by which organic life has reached its present high plane in man? Has this murderous struggle for existence brought about that natural selection whereby man has been evolved from the lowest living organisms?

I grant that it has, but when I look back over the devastated pathway by which man has reached his present high plane of being, I stand aghast at the spilled blood and broken skulls that strew the way. I am appalled at the countless billions that have gone down in

that struggle, and I am inclined to think that the bloody price of progress has now been fully paid.

Must the fittest to survive be for ever the one that has the sharpest tooth and strongest jaw? Shall fitness to survive be for ever measured by the yardstick of selfishness?

It may be true among brutes that selfishness is the chief condition that determines progress; but man has emerged from the state of the beast, and has a lofty intellect by means of which he measures worlds and compares infinities. This intellect, being a product of Nature, is a part of Nature, and shall it not enter into the conditions of natural selection and so modify that process that fitness to survive may hereafter be measured in units of usefulness instead of units of selfishness?

I think it may, for it is unbelievable that superiority of skill in the practice of selfishness is the only kind of superiority that will ever insure survival; and yet I know that, in

the past, the loftiest superiority of other kinds has paid the price of death for the privilege of advancing the race.

But selfishness, as a factor in evolution, is progressing swiftly to its limit, if, indeed, it has not already begun its own destruction. When selfishness raises the hand of savage against savage and the fang of beast against beast, it may cause the cruelest hand and the most venomous tooth to survive and propagate its kind; but when selfishness squats like an imp on the throne on which Cupid once reigned, the end is in sight. The selfishness which embitters woman against man, and man against woman, cannot propagate its kind save by example. It cannot beget its kind in flesh and blood.

The competitive warfare that has raised man to his present high plane has grown so familiar that he thinks it is needful and always will be. It has sharpened men's wits and brought forth great inventions; it has built up great fortunes and cities; it has

circled the globe with copper and steel; it has heated and lighted our houses with steam and electricity; it has brought to our breakfast tables the news of what has been done in the world overnight.

Will it enable us to amass still greater fortunes, and build still greater (and dirtier) cities, and talk still further over a wire or across oceans without any wire, and travel in still greater luxury to Hongkong or Peking? Will it make our newspapers still greater and more widely read, and our books better bound, and our bread better baked, and our beer better brewed?

Aye, it will; and so would a kind of competition that would impel us primarily to seek the advancement of the race, and seek our own advancement only so far as we can advance without injury to our fellows. But if we continue to advance by the hostile method, what shall we presently be able to buy with our fortunes that we shall care to have? What shall we be able to say over a

telephone wire that will make us or any one else any better or happier? What shall we do in Hongkong or Peking when we get there that would not better be left undone? Who will care to season his breakfast with the news of the night when he must tremblingly read the whole paper to see if his own name has been blasted at last, or worse blasted than it was before? Who will care to read editorials, however learned, when one knows that the writer would have written the opposite for one cent more a yard, and would tomorrow for one cent less if he should lose his present job? Who will care for better bound books, when the world grows so selfish that a book with a truth in it could not be sold? Who will care for better baked bread or better brewed beer, when one knows the whole world could see one choke on one's bread or one's beer and not care a rap?

Inventions may facilitate useful endeavor, but they do not compel it; and the only thing that can compel it is something in the

heart which hostile competition will never put there, though it build railroads from Cape Town to New Zealand, or air ships that will travel from New York to Mars.

Then, when woman puts on her armor to take part in the strife that builds fortunes and employs all sorts of inventions, is she sure she is helping the race toward its goal? Is she sure that the masculine methods which she seems proud to practise have not ceased to be fit to be practised, even by men?

And yet I would not chide her. At least, I would not chide her sex alone for the colossal selfishness that holds both sexes in its grasp. It forces her into her present life. It rules the world; the world whose gold does not enrich it, whose prayers do not sanctify it; the world in which the justice of the peace too often fails to make us happy when he marries us; for truly, there are more things than banks and churches in this world: there is also the divorce court.

V

THE RELEASE FROM PAIN

AS the Lonely Man still sits musing before his fire, he cannot repress a smile at what appears to be the capriciousness and obstinacy of his thoughts. They select their own subject, apparently in the most haphazard fashion, without obtaining his consent, and dwell upon that subject as long as they like. When they wander off toward any subject, whether it is an old language or a new woman, they become so engrossed in it that they do not pay as much attention as one might think they should pay to the other well-dressed and good-looking thoughts which

they find walking around the subject and bowing to each other.

Sometimes they jostle these other thoughts and tread on their toes. They do not mean to be rude. They merely want to view the subject, and, as they seem to have no fear of being trodden upon themselves, they do not try to keep off the toes of other thoughts.

The Lonely Man has tried to dress his thoughts in clothes of the most fashionable cut, and part their hair in the middle, and otherwise make them look like nice, conventional thoughts. Then, when they have been properly groomed and correctly dressed, he has sent them forth to any subject you please to mention, looking just like any other respectable, well-bred thoughts; and they have come back without a rag on their persons, revealing their paternity in every limb and gesture.

This seems all wrong. It would save so much trouble if one's thoughts would observe the conventionalities and make themselves

look exactly like the thoughts of every one else in the crowd, and never disarrange their toilets by tussling with anything like a truth. One would get the reputation of being a very nice man indeed if one's thoughts would only do that.

One has but to train one's thoughts properly, dress them properly, and tell them to be good thoughts and take off their hats to all other thoughts, and close their eyes when they are in danger of seeing anything that might alter their appearance. Then they will come home looking just as they looked when they sallied forth. Only they will not if one does any thinking; and all those who have tried the experiment know it.

The only way to make people think alike is to make them think the truth. When we send our thoughts off to the multiplication table and things of that class, they have no difficulty in maintaining their resemblance to the thoughts of other people; but, as few of the subjects which engage our attention belong

to this class, our thoughts will certainly have their toilets disarranged if they stray very far. Their straying, however, may enlarge the boundaries of knowledge and of unanimous thinking.

The Lonely Man's thoughts were now straying in the direction of the pain and other forms of evil in the world. Of course, he was not certain that he knew how evil got into the world, but he was pretty certain that it would be a good thing to abandon some of the current theories on that subject.

The theories of which he was thinking start out with foundations of cobwebs, which support formidable-looking castles of air crystallized into words, and they reach the conclusion that "the principle of the universe is radically perverse and cannot be amended." The architects of these gloomy castles invariably keep on living, which is the strongest argument they employ, but it spoils their castles.

It is possible to build anything of air (thought the Lonely Man) if one use enough of it and expend industry enough in converting it into words; and it is a singular fact that the most terrifying and depressing things in the world are constructed of air and cobwebs, or still more highly rarefied substances.

Even the old-fashioned Devil — the one on whom Luther wasted his ink — was so airy that the ink bottle went clear through him and broke on the wall and left a spot which the credulous tourist may see yet.

A personal Devil was a sufficient explanation of evil only for simple minds. It would not do for the philosophers of the early part of the last century; so they built pretty little castles of gloom of their own in Germany, Italy, and other places.

The explanations of science were equally inadequate for these philosophers; so they tried to construct their castles of something more real than the realities of science — and built them of air and cobwebs.

There was Schopenhauer, who built a wonderful castle of gloom at Dresden and called it Pessimism. It is built very largely of air, but it deserves to endure on account of its bold workmanship and some of the beautiful truths that are imbedded in its walls. They are more substantial than air, and must have been dragged in unwittingly, for they have not the color of pessimism. Some of the frowning parapets might have been made equally gloomy if they had been constructed of the realities of science, but the dismal black of the main walls is seen to be a mere pigment of words, which can be scraped off. We are the less inclined to forgive the use of so black a paint when we find that the architect himself, after advocating utter poverty as a means of alleviating the miseries of life, and death as a means of ending them, angrily accuses his innocent sister when he loses a part of his own fortune (which he afterwards recovers to the last *pfennig*, with interest), and flees to Frankfort to escape the cholera.

Then, there was poor Leopardi in Italy — deformed, half blind, wholly deaf, sleepless, racked with pain, with no companions, little money, and a bright mind. How he loved his castles of gloom, and how he loved to build them! Every insubstantial brick in their walls seems to have been laid with a caress. They are built with the skill of a consummate literary artist, but they are built wholly of crystallized air. The architect thought he was portraying the miseries of the world, when he was but craving a little sympathy for his own. We find him luxuriating in the abysmal melancholy of his awful castles, holding out to us pessimism in all its naked terrors, "dallying lovingly with the idea of death" — and dreading the cholera. The quick death of cholera seems to have been too easy for any of the thorough-going pessimists. They were too eager to enjoy the miseries of life to die of cholera.

Then, there was my Russian friend who lived in a German pension. He spoke five

languages (I never knew a Russian who spoke fewer than five languages), and he spoke pessimism in them all. When he spoke, the other guests of the *pension* were silent. The other guests were usually silent.

No *Frühstück* could he eat without scolding the *Stubenmädchen* about his *Stiefel* or something else. No *Abendbrod* could he eat without depicting — in five languages — the vanities and miseries of life. These were the only two meals he ever ate, for he never got up till noon.

He was thoroughly convinced that *alles Leben ist Leiden*. But did he drink carbolic acid and die? Ah, no; not he. He had no fear, as Hamlet had, of that "something after death" which

> "Puzzles the will
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of."

For him, there was no possibility of pain beyond the grave; but when one lives in a

castle of pessimism, one does not die. One has an artistic temperament, — whatever that may be, — and one lives to enjoy the architectural beauty of one's imponderable castle. One has a nice little income, and nothing to do — and one does it. One feeds one's self well. There is such keen delight in the misery of eating! When one is full of food and beer, and the smile of contented misery breaks over one's plump countenance, one retires a short distance from the table and snuggles into the dismal coziness of the sofa. Then one smokes a cigarette while one discourses on the sweet bitterness of existence, and shows that life is a burden of pain, and the world a vale of tears. Then one goes to the opera, and pays the equivalent of two dollars for the privilege of weeping at the imaginary death of an unreal hero. The real world is so cruel that it will not even give one all the misery one requires; so one weeps at a tragedy on a stage, and reads Byron and Von Hartmann and the rest.

Away back in the winding labyrinths of one's soul one cherishes Something for which one lives. It is so defined that it shall escape the definition of happiness. It is not happiness; it is something better than happiness. One never reveals this Something, but one keeps it and hugs it in one's soul, while one points out to others the wretchedness of life and the futility of all endeavor. Why may one not destroy all the pleasure and happiness in the world? One still has the Something. One does not destroy that; and one lives to enjoy it. No one else knows one has it; therein consists its principal charm. So one paints one's castle of gloom as black as one likes, and makes its corridors as dark, and its chimneys as cavernous, and its cellars as nearly bottomless, as it is possible to make them. It frightens the beholders deliciously, and air is cheap; but one hugs the Something all the while, and is hap — no, not happy, for there is no adjective in any language corresponding to this Something. If one has comfort, one is

comfortable; if one has happiness, one is happy. But if one has Something, what is one? There is no adjective in any language to tell what one is; and thus the secret is the more easily kept.

We all have this Something, some of us without knowing it. It is more precious to us than happiness, and there is apparently nothing that can destroy it. In its indestructibility one seems to acquire a sort of perpetuity one's self; and thus, in an incomprehensible sense, it seems that one will live to possess this Something after one has, in every comprehensible sense, ceased to exist at all. It sometimes makes one willing to live a life of actual pain, and work without any hope of reward in this world or any other, and then undergo what one believes to be annihilation. It is this that impels an unbeliever in immortality to die in what he believes to be a worthy cause. In doing this one does not get happiness; one gets Something, and seems to acquire an eternal claim

upon it. It is this that one gets in the recollection of past pains and dangers; it is this that one gets in all the griefs and miseries with which one delights one's self.

When one tries to bring forth to the light of day this Something it eludes one. One cannot grasp it firmly, just as one cannot firmly grasp the ultimate parts into which a quantity of matter or a portion of space is divisible. If there are ultimate atoms which cannot be physically divided, they can, at least, be ideally bisected by an imaginary plane, and each half may be bisected, and the process may be indefinitely continued. The ultimate division is either absolutely nothing, or it is of infinitesimal volume. If it is absolutely nothing, an aggregation of absolute nothings constitutes something; which is absurd and logically impossible. If it is, on the other hand, of infinitesimal volume or of any volume whatever, and cannot be even ideally divided, it does not consist of two halves or four quarters; for to say that it does consist

of two halves or four quarters is ideally to divide it; and, however small it may be, if it does not consist of two halves or four quarters, it is utterly incomprehensible. To escape a logical absurdity, we are obliged to accept an actual incomprehensibility. It is so with this Something in one's mind. It is incomprehensible, but it is there.

This Something is entirely satisfactory in its own realm, but it does not fill one's soul. It leaves some room for happiness. Some people would rather have happiness than Something, anyhow. One must be a philosopher to prefer Something to happiness, and we are not all philosophers. Therefore we look around in the world for a comprehensible kind of happiness, and we find that pain is, apparently, considerably in excess of that kind of happiness which we can clearly define and bring squarely before the mind. It seems wholly unnecessary to build gloomy castles of air, or to waste our tears on the griefs of imaginary heroes. We can find

plenty of good substantial pain in the world without looking for artificial grief in the product of any one's imagination.

Then optimism comes with its bright hues and its cheerful voice, and gives us a simple recipe for either annihilating pain or embellishing it into a thing of beauty. Pain is to be annihilated by denying its existence; when its existence cannot be denied, it is to be beautified by the exercise of hope.

The recipe is so simple that the simplest soul can use it. One divides one's pains into two classes — the less obvious and the more obvious. One denies the existence of the former, and, presto! they are gone. One looks at the others through the medium of hope and sees the bright colors of the rainbow playing about them. Pain, clothed with the iridescence of optimism, becomes a thing of usefulness in this world and the paltry price of endless joy in the next.

Now, such is the nature of pain that to ignore it is to dull its edge; to forget it is

to destroy it. It exists only in consciousness, and when there is no consciousness of it, there can be no pain. In addition to this, pain is the most instructive thing in the world. So far optimism is right.

But one cannot destroy a doorpost by denying its existence, nor can one make scarlet fever less contagious by denying that it is contagious at all. The existence of these things is not confined to consciousness, and they cannot be destroyed by being forgotten. If a person ignores these things, he does so at his peril, for the doorpost still exists and is still hard, and scarlet fever is still contagious and still dangerous.

If there were no grounds for hoping that pain may ultimately be exterminated, a doctrine which teaches us to ignore and forget it would be invaluable, for such a doctrine would make an otherwise intolerable existence tolerable; but where there is reason to believe that most of the pain in the world could be avoided and might be relieved,

such a doctrine is more depressing than pessimism.

I see in my fancy an optimist. Though I see her only in fancy, I have often seen her in the flesh, and once I knew her well. What matters it if, as I see her now, she may be the composite product of my recollections of several different persons? I do not say that she is, but what matters it? To me she is one, and her personality is always the same. I see her now as I have seen her a thousand times before. She is a fair young girl who has just crossed the threshold of womanhood, and is beautiful with the delicate beauty of a half-blown rose — the beauty that is untainted with knowledge and untarnished by contact with the world.

In the innocence of her sixteen years she believes that this is the best of possible worlds; that men and women are generally unselfish and just; that ability always succeeds, and merit is always recognized and rewarded; that what little pain there is in

the world is wisely ordained by a beneficent Providence, and that it will be amply recompensed in a future life. Poor girl, as to the last clause of her belief, I trust she is right. As to the others, her faith is the pathetic faith of those in whom there is no guile.

To her the only real pain in the world is the pain which others suffer; and no hand is more willing to relieve such pain than is her own; and no one's cheerful courage does more to make such pain a pleasure to its victim.

She lives on a farm, where there are time and quiet for thinking, and large subjects for thought; but to her gentle soul there is something irreverent in thought, and something impious in inquiry. So she does not think of the meaning of the life which she sees all about her; nor of the lore of the rocks, which reaches back into the remotest past; nor of the vastness of infinity, in whose depths the stars twinkle at night; but of the Father who is among and above the

stars, and on earth and everywhere; who might have made it all otherwise, but who made it all as it is for the love he bore mankind.

She sees the beauty of beneficent caprice; not the beauty of universal order, nor the grimness of an eternal necessity, running through the universe, — a necessity to which we may — nay, must — learn to adjust ourselves if we would be truly happy.

To her the Father decrees the sprouting of every little blade of grass, the coming of every storm, and the course of every planet and star. He does it all for the good of man. He can alter it all, and will, at the entreaty of one fair girl who kneels in her nightdress at her window and pleads in her gentle voice for something to satisfy the yearning in her heart, which she, in her innocence, thinks is a yearning for the Father himself. Perhaps it is.

Old Mother Nature hears the prayer, and chuckles. She has made the prayer herself. She has put the same prayer — less eloquent,

perhaps, but the same prayer— in the heart of every bird that mates in the Spring, and in the heart of every butterfly whose gaudy wings reveal its presence and its eagerness to find a mate.

There are waste places in the world, unpeopled by sentient beings. There is room in the water, in the air, and on the land for more living beings and for higher ones. Then, men and women die in the course of time, and their places must be filled, for the game which Nature is playing with the race is not yet played out.

So she puts a yearning in the fair optimist's heart, and the yearning finds expression in the prayer, and presently is satisfied; for a man comes into the optimist's life, a man who is to her a paragon of all the masculine perfections. And now, when the optimist prays, it is to thank the Father for his infinite goodness to her.

There is reason for her gratitude: her optimism has been justified. The man who

has come into her life is entirely human, but he is not of the common herd of men. His life has been as spotless as her own (incredible but true), and he loves his pretty little optimist with the singleness of heart and the constancy which such a girl deserves. Such deep sincerity as theirs, such lofty courage, and such intense happiness would take the edge from any testy hermit's cynicism.

So the years pass swiftly, and when the little optimist has been married for two years and is living in a city home, she is still happy, still trustful, still deeply in love with her husband and with life, and she is more optimistic than ever. If she could hear the sacrilegious questions of the unsanctified, she would shudder and close her ears to them. She would not be able to see how any good man could question the justice and beneficence of the existing order of things. It is all so simple to her: God is the author of all; therefore, whatever is, is right, and what

does not seem to be right is a divine mystery which it were presumptuous to investigate.

And pray, why should she disturb her peace with vain questionings? Her husband loves her as he loves his life. He is a keen man of affairs, whom the world respects and admires; his coffers are filled with gold; the pride of success is written large on his handsome face; and his love for her is evidenced by all his acts. She is beautiful and rich; her friends are legion and her influence is wide; and her heart is so full of happiness that she kneels every night at her bedside to thank the Father up among the stars for his goodness to her and for the beautiful world; and she asks him to give to others the same unquestioning faith that has brought so much joy to her.

Then one day her husband comes home in the middle of the afternoon. He is not quite well; he thinks he has caught cold.

Poor maligned cold! Is there any ill that affects humanity for which you have not been

blamed? Did any dirty cut ever inflame and destroy a limb or a life but you were convicted and the guilty microbes acquitted?

Her husband has a strong will and thinks he does not need a doctor, and she, in her optimism, believes him; but an expression of startled incredulity blends with her reassuring smile as her husband's pain grows worse and his groans more pitiful.

She smiles still, but there is a big tear on each cheek as she asks the doctor when he does come if her husband will be sick all night, and the brave little smile goes out in a pathetic little sob. She has no doubt or fear, but it grieves her to see her husband suffer so. She hardly knows what the doctor is saying when he explains that the illness is dangerous; but he knows, and he knows that if he had been called a day sooner there would have been a slight possibility of saving the patient by an operation, and that there is no such possibility now.

So she prays to the good Father up among

the stars to give back the dear life and the strong arm and the loving heart that He gave her before; implores Him with piteous sobs to remember that her life is intertwined with her husband's by a thousand tender ties; beseeches Him to take all else from her if He will only leave her husband — just as thousands of others have prayed who have prayed in vain. She is sleepless in her eagerness to help in the relief of the terrible pain, and she thinks her heart will surely break as she sees the deathly pallor deepen and feels the dying limbs grow more like ice, and knows at last that there is no hope.

Though the malady runs its fatal course in three or four days, these three or four days are to the optimist as three or four years, and no man knows how long they are to the dying patient, for his mind remains clear till the shuddering body lies at last at the very point of death.

When he dies, there is for a time an end of optimism. All that made the world a

pleasant place is gone out of it. It is now impossible to see the beauty of life or the goodness of God. There is nothing left in the world but a hopeless loneliness, which seems to weigh like a millstone on one's heart and to grow heavier hour by hour, and more unutterably sad as every familiar object in the house recalls with silent pathos the happy incidents of the past. There is now no apparent irreverence in asking, Why? Why has so good a man and so loving a husband been cut down in the full vigor of youth? Why has he been killed by slow torture that would have been worse than that inflicted by the cruelest savages if it had not been in some measure relieved by the doctor's efforts? Why has her heart been broken and every tender, clinging fibre of her being trodden upon as with a heel of iron?

She will not ask, but in the endless night, as she paces the floor alone with her grief, the elfish questions hover about in the darkness, like messengers from Hell, and try to

creep deep into her soul. When her gray face looks out at the dawn, the questions are still there, and a wicked voice which she knows is not her own seems to say in almost audible tones, "There is no God! There is no God!"

Again she prays, and now she prays with the trembling desperation of one who would escape complete despair. It is not for happiness that she prays, nor for life, nor death, but for one little fragment of the crumbling raft of faith that will keep her from sinking in the black flood of despair that is rising about her. So she struggles against despair till exhaustion overcomes her; and the struggle is many times repeated.

But at last merciful time dulls the sharp edge of her grief. She does not despair, and her faith and her optimism return. She does not understand it, but she knows it was for the best, and the Father is still a loving Father who does all things for our good. So she takes up her broken life again, and

fills it with a factitious happiness, and spends much time in prayer.

A few years flit by, and as she realizes that she is still young, still beautiful, and still rich, her optimism begins again to paint the dull old world in something like its former cheerful hues.

Then one morning a letter arrives from her agent, informing her that her fortune has been lost. It has, in fact, been stolen — though not in violation of the law. A skilful thief does not violate the law. Those burglars who crack safes and forge names are dull souls who cannot appreciate the refinements of modern robbery.

The optimist does not believe there has been any dishonesty, or that it would be possible for a thief to be accounted a respectable citizen; but she realizes that in her husband's death she has lost not only the love of his loyal heart, but the protection of his master mind; and grief amid the luxurious surroundings of wealth is one thing,

while grief with the lean wolf of poverty sniffing at the door is quite another.

But to her optimistic mind this seems a trifling loss. It was only when her heart was broken that her optimism failed her. Already she sees the goodness of God in taking away her fortune. It was to stimulate her to do something good and great in his service. She will become a nurse, and by her faithfulness and devotion to her work she will rise to the highest fame, and the world will speak her name with reverence, as it speaks the name of Florence Nightingale.

She obtains the necessary credentials and enters a training school. She is sure that in this unselfish work she will have the help of God and the high appreciation of mankind, and her optimism paints a roseate picture of the future.

But it is all different from what she thought it would be. No one seems to appreciate her loftiness of purpose in coming here, and there is less opportunity of doing good than

she thought there would be. For three months she does nothing but make beds and do other work which an ordinarily intelligent servant should be able to do; and she presently learns that this is to be done, not to please God nor to pave her way to fame, but to escape the censure of the head nurse.

Her head nurse is a blond girl whose eyes slant downwards from the top of her nose. She is not popular with the probationers nor with the nurses in general, but she does not seem to care. She is in high favor with the superintendent of the training school.

So the optimist works like a galley slave in wards redolent of iodoform, and will earn the right to be a head nurse, by and by, herself. She has a pleasant smile for every one; and the months go by, and she does not become a head nurse.

The blond girl is already an assistant superintendent — but she is not an optimist. It might not be just to say that the blond girl has obtained her promotion through anything

like toadyism or flattery, for she is fully competent to fill her new position. But there are other equally competent nurses who have not been promoted. And the blond girl does understand the use of that seductive flattery which does its work and leaves no trace; and she never wastes it on her subordinates. It is almost noticeable that she reserves it for members of the directory or of the hospital staff, or for the superintendent.

The optimist sees no connection between all this and the blond girl's promotion. Merit is the only ground of promotion here, as elsewhere. So she works harder than ever and is startled when she looks in her mirror and sees that her beautiful complexion is gone and that she is becoming bent and haggard.

It does not matter, for fame is just beyond. She will deserve promotion, and then it will come; and she already sees her portrait among those of others of the world's benefactors.

One morning she is transferred to the operating room. She has never witnessed an

operation before, and to her there is a gruesome novelty about the steam from the sterilizer, the fumes of ether and carbolic acid, the ghastly face of the unconscious patient, the grotesque white costumes of the surgeon and his assistants, and the glass cases full of glittering and cruel-looking instruments. Her pulse quickens, and her heart beats with audible violence within her emaciated breast.

She has nothing to do but to hold a basin of sponges where the second assistant can reach them with his blood-stained left hand.

But the optimist cannot help looking at the face and listening to the spluttering breathing, although it is not necessary for her to do this. Of course she knows the operation will save the patient's life, and the patient does not feel it, and it is a noble work; and she has nothing to do but to hold the basin for the blood-stained hand — nothing to do but that.

The surgeon is looking at her with a cynical smile. He says nothing, and presently

proceeds with the operation, while the smile hovers around the corners of his mouth. It is so very funny that the new nurse should look so ghastly pale.

The optimist bites her under lip to keep from fainting, but her hand trembles so violently that the edge of the basin strikes the second assistant's hand when it comes out for another sponge, and he turns his head slightly to look at her, and then he smiles. It is very funny indeed.

If she could only keep the room from swaying, she could stand firmly, but it rocks so violently, and the steam is so suffocating, and the blood on the hand is so red — so red — so very red — that she faints, and the second assistant catches her just in time to prevent her from knocking her head against the tiled floor. Then she is carried out; the second assistant disinfects his hands, and the operation goes silently on.

When she revives, the superintendent is sitting beside her with the look of ineffable

superiority which only this superintendent knows how to wear. One of the superintendent's eyebrows is, by nature, a little higher than the other. When she wishes to feel and seem especially superior, it goes a little higher still. Just now it is at its highest point.

The superintendent was born with a heart, but finding a heart both useless and dangerous in the struggle for advancement, she has allowed it to atrophy, and now, instead of a heart, she has a pair of all-seeing eyes, with a perennially elevated brow over the left one. The superintendent has noticed of late that the optimist is hardly fitted for her work. The superintendent has had unfavorable reports from the optimist through the blond girl with the slanting eyes. The superintendent thinks, in short, that it will be best for the institution, as well as for the optimist — especially for the optimist — to cancel the contract, release the optimist from any further obligations, and permit her to return to her

home, although she knows the girl no longer has a home.

The superintendent is not an optimist herself. She knows that envious eyes are looking in vain for some flaw in her work, and that if she would hold her own position, she must be eternally vigilant and absolutely inexorable.

So, no more of fame for the present. The only heart that ever loved the little optimist as every woman wishes to be loved, has long since ceased to beat; her fortune is gone, and her health is ruined, but her optimism still weaves a halo of paling iridescence about her future. If she were a little stronger she would try again and succeed. She will stay in the city and support herself till she is able to give nursing another trial. She is not endowed with those attributes which seem to be necessary in a nurse, but she has other attributes which make it possible for her to be useful. Those persons who are most highly endowed must stand higher than others; it is just that they should. But all

are endowed in some degree, and, in justice, should have some place in the social organism. All cannot be great painters, nor great inventors, nor great nurses. All cannot help the race in an equal degree, and therefore cannot enjoy an equal measure of gratitude and fame; but all may help the race in some degree, and may have, in some measure, the rewards of usefulness. If all cannot find the same level, surely each may find his own level without pushing his fellows down.

She is not seeking fame now. She only wants a living and the comforting assurance that she is earning it. There can be no difficulty in finding useful employment of some kind. The times are prosperous. The great city is full of activity. Surely she can take some part in it. Furthermore, she is living in the most highly civilized country in the world, among beings who have been taught for nineteen centuries to love their neighbors as themselves. If each one loves her as he loves himself, she can find a thou-

sand openings in an hour. So she breathes out a tremulous little prayer to the Father, and in the morning she takes a cheap lodging and begins to look for employment.

She learns from a daily paper that fifty saleswomen are wanted in a large department store. She immediately applies for a position, but she finds many ahead of her. She must stand in a line and wait for her turn. As she moves slowly along with the line, she has time to notice that many of the applicants are extremely pretty, and suddenly she remembers that she has seldom seen a plain-looking saleswoman in this store. With a pang she realizes that her own beauty is gone, but that can surely not impair her chances of being employed. Her mind is alert, her character is unimpeachable, and she could do her work as well as any of those girls who are confidently smiling as they sign their applications at the manager's desk. She will not be rejected on account of her looks. That brusque man at the desk cannot be so

sentimental as to prefer saleswomen simply because they are pretty.

No, my dear optimist, he is not sentimental, but he knows that personal attractions in a saleswoman have a distinct commercial value. He takes advantage of existing conditions. In days agone, the prettiness of these girls would have been hidden under the bushel of domesticity. It would have been wasted in attracting a husband and brightening a home and assisting its possessor to find her way to hearts that would have continued to love her after the decay of her prettiness. Since then the world has progressed. The world is emancipated. The prettiness of these girls will help their employer to put dollars in his tills. Customers will buy more goods from a pretty girl than they would from a plain girl who might be an equally competent saleswoman.

Of course, the pretty girl does not get the money. Her employer gets that. But is it not just that he should? He has hired that

girl's prettiness and put it on exhibition behind his counter for commercial purposes, just as he exposes his wares. Prettiness in the old days could help a girl to get a living only by exposing her to the inconvenience of being loved and more or less monopolized by one man. Now she can sell her prettiness on the market to a corporation that does not want her heart, and will have no further use for her prettiness after all the money has been squeezed out of it.

You will find some plain girls in the employ of this house, but they either have specially valuable endowments of some other kind, or were employed when the supply of prettiness was not equal to the demand.

The optimist now stands before the manager, whose look of bored indifference gradually breaks into a cynical smile, the same smile that she saw on the faces of the surgeon and his second assistant, the smile of a man who is reminded by the desperate distress of another that he himself is still glad

to be alive. He shoves an application form toward her, although he has, in his own mind, already rejected her, and he seems to enjoy the pitiful eagerness with which she signs her name.

Then she goes home to her lodging to wait and rest and nurse her hope. She hears nothing of her application on the next day, and on the second day she returns to the store to learn her fate.

After much trouble she gains an audience with the manager, who now tells her, without any further formality, that she will not do; and she staggers into the street without knowing how, and wanders endlessly without knowing where.

What would you have? The manager does not own the store. He himself is working for a salary, and if he does not use his utmost endeavor to procure saleswomen who will be most profitable to his employer, a manager with less heart and more acumen will be employed in his stead. Twenty en-

vious subordinates are already scheming to get his place.

Days go by, — days of dreary disappointment and cruel rebuffs, — and Christmas is coming on apace. Shop windows are taking on a gay appearance; streets in the shopping district are crowded with pedestrians and carriages; a happy expectancy is in the air — a sort of anticipatory glow of gladness which will break into its full radiance only at Christmas. Surely in this time of universal gladness and good will, the little optimist will not be overlooked.

She is not disappointed. In the middle of December she is employed in a big store that needs more saleswomen to meet the demands of the holiday trade. In the general thawing out of hearts which this season promotes, does not a manager's heart thaw out so that he becomes willing to employ a little optimist in spite of her inexperience and the loss of her good looks? She thinks it does, and goes gladly to work.

There are great crowds in the store, and there is much selecting of presents by persons who have much to say about the silly custom of giving presents at Christmas. The givers are generally burdened by the giving, and the recipients are seldom pleased with the gifts; but when one knows one will receive something which one does not want, one must also give something which will not be wanted.

The little optimist shudders. Is this what Christmas means to these people? It is not what it has meant to her.

The conversation among the customers goes on. One makes a shabby joke about letting the laundress wait till Christmas presents have been paid for. Another makes the same joke about the landlady.

Then this season of intensified Christianity is the season of neglected obligations! It is the season when the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick-maker may snap their fingers for their money till we get ready to pay them!

Well, yes; but at this season of joy and gladness, when one loves one's fellow-man, if ever, must not one buy presents to show it, and to show that one is not a mere selfish heathen? Are not dead walls and magazine covers illuminated with advertisements gayly suggestive of the coming cheer, and sweetly reminiscent of Him who preached peace on earth and good will to men? Are not the shop windows decorated, and the streets and sidewalks crowded, and the clerks busy, and the sleigh-bells jingling, because some nineteen centuries ago Christ was born?

My dear optimist, there may be some (I am sure there are) to whom this season means a warming of the heart toward one's fellow-beings; to whom it brings a thousand tender memories sweeter than those awakened by any other season of the year — persons who find a joy in giving and a pleasure in receiving not to be measured in money. But the bustling activity in which you are now taking part is not the result of a doctrine of

peace on earth and good will toward men; it is not a joyful celebration of the birth of Him who preached that doctrine; it is the result of the skilful execution of an elaborate trick of commerce, whereby utterly useless goods can be sold at enormous profits and old goods brought forth from their hiding places and sold at advanced prices. You cannot see this? No optimist can. But it is true.

The little optimist is very tired in the evening, but she is happy. She is at last taking part in the world's activity. She has at last found her level, and can, in her humble way, be useful in the world. She is even growing stronger in spite of her hard work. At her counter she has made some friends who have been acute enough to see in her face the beauty which mere emaciation does not destroy, acute enough to read in that pale face a history of pathetic suffering made more pathetic still by the uncomplaining resignation with which it has been borne.

There has been little time for confidences at her counter, but one lady has learned enough to become interested and to want to help the optimist in the execution of her plans. The lady is connected with the management of a training school and has asked the little optimist to call on her.

So the world grows suddenly bright again, and she becomes exceedingly happy. You see, all things come to him who knows how to wait. Is it not a dear old world after all? There are kind hearts in it, and (there is no doubt about it) her prettiness is returning. There is an encouraging little suggestion of pink in her cheeks, especially in the afternoon. There is a brightness in the eyes that is really striking. It is true there is a cough, but it is growing better. Such coughs are always growing better.

She stands before her mirror and arranges her hair in the prettiest manner she can invent. Yes, her prettiness is really returning, and the knowledge gives her pleasure so

intense that she fears it springs from sinful vanity; but it is really due to an instinct that teaches any woman that her strongest weapon in the encounter with the world is an attractive exterior. She can do something with brains if she has them, but if she has prettiness, she can often get credit for brains that she does not have; and in any case, whether she is "emancipated" or not, so long as there are men in the world, she can never accomplish as much with brains as she can with a pretty face or a handsome figure.

On Christmas Eve five hundred girls are discharged — the optimist among them. The holiday trade is over. The old goods have either been disposed of or will have to wait till the next anniversary of the Master's birthday improves the market. She is not yet strong enough to enter the new training school, and she goes trembling to her knees again.

But why should I follow her sad history further? Why should I recall the pathetic

details to the end? Is it not the old story of the weak, whom the world loves to kick out of the way to make room for the strong? Who cares for the weak and their infirmities? To the wall with them, and then to the poor-house or the hospital. We will care for them there till they die, for we are Christians, but who wants them to live among men and perpetuate their weaknesses? Let us have a strong race, a race of noble creatures who are able to withstand a hostile world or kick a cringing dog! Let us, by all means, guard the race against corruption with those qualities that are of no present commercial value!

And yet, when I look back to my little optimist's palmy days, I cannot think the race would suffer if there were more like her in the world. I cannot think the battle goes against her because of *her* unfitness. When I see how hope revives within that broken heart and glows with undimmed lustre to the end (which is not long delayed); when I see the patient soul go out without a murmur at

the treatment which it had received; when I see on her dead face the stamp of something higher than what is called success could put there; when I see the bitter grief of those whose love she never knew she had, I pay the silent tribute of a tear to her sublime philosophy of hope, and hope myself that in some way which labored logic cannot bring to light, that gentle soul will be rewarded.

But when I see the cruel ignorance which optimism fosters in those who harbor it, and the brutal selfishness it hides in others, I am impelled to rend the pretty mask into a thousand fragments, and show beneath its rainbow colors this pair of vampires that suck the blood of victims while they sleep.

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If instead of increasing the total amount of pain in the world by adding an unreal kind to the real kind, as the pessimists do; and instead of concealing from our timid eyes the existence of real pain and injustice, as the optimists do, we should cast about for

methods of reducing the amount of pain that actually exists, we might find the work equally interesting and profitable.

Here one is led to wonder whether it is possible to abolish pain; and this leads one to inquire why pain is in the world at all.

Those who believe that the world is controlled by a supernatural divinity that is not subject to the same natural and logical necessities that govern other beings, must believe that pain was deliberately and arbitrarily introduced into the world by that divinity; or that the divinity deliberately and arbitrarily permitted a malevolent spirit to introduce pain into the world; or that the malevolent spirit was so powerful that it introduced pain into the world in spite of the divinity. There is no other possible supposition. Either of the first two suppositions would imply that the divinity is cruel; the last, that it is not omnipotent. Any of the suppositions would be discreditable to the divinity, and a reverent man who thinks

about the matter is led to believe that any possible conception of a supernatural divinity is wrong; while an irreverent man who thinks about the matter is led to believe that there is no divinity at all.

Those who do not think about the matter, but accept the dictum established by the automatic thinking of crowds, will, if they are reverent, believe that pain exists by the will or permission of the divinity, and that it will continue till it has been exterminated through some miraculous alteration of external Nature or through some equally miraculous alteration of the heart of man. The less reverent will continue to believe that man is the sport of a pitiless Nature that is so constituted that the race must suffer till it perishes.

I perceive that I am thinking again, the Lonely Man mused. It is fortunate that no one is obliged to follow me, for people will forgive almost anything except compelling them to think. It would be laborious to my-

self if it lasted long, but I perceive whither my thinking is leading me, and I also begin to perceive something like method in the capriciousness of my thoughts.

Let us suppose that the divinity, of which we seem to catch fleeting glimpses in Nature, is inherent in Nature. Such a divinity could not make the sum of two and two anything but four. It could not make two hills without an intervening valley. It could not make a fire cold simply because some one happened to thrust his fingers into it. It could not suspend the operation of gravity because some one happened to fall over the balusters. It would be subject to the same eternal immutability of law, and to the same inexorable necessities of logic that govern everything else in Nature. We could, on the one hand, have no grounds for accusing such a divinity of cruelty because pain exists, and we should, on the other hand, have no excuse for passively awaiting an equitable adjustment of things in some future world.

We should get into the habit of believing that if our existence is to be continued at all, it will be continued in some natural way, which will still leave us at the mercy of unfriendly conditions till we learn to adjust ourselves to them. We should, therefore, endeavor to cure what it is sometimes so difficult to endure.

When we look about further to ascertain the cause of pain, we find that all the pain we suffer is the result either of our own ignorance and selfishness or of the ignorance and selfishness of other people. One puts one's hand into a fire because one is ignorant of the unpleasant effect of fire on a hand. One learns what the effect is, and adjusts one's self to fire afterwards so as to avoid its unpleasant effects. One treads on a banana peel and falls to the sidewalk, either because one does not know the banana peel is there, or because one is ignorant of a banana peel's peculiar property of reducing friction. One learns, and adjusts one's self to banana peels accord-

ingly. One steps into a trap, whether it consists of iron or an insidious habit, because one is ignorant either of its presence or of its deadly power.

One commits a crime because one does not know that there is no escape from the just penalties of actual wrong-doing. Intelligence may permit one to believe that it is possible to escape the vengeance of man in this world and of God in the next, but it is the densest ignorance which leads one to believe that there is any escape from the torment of remorse and the loathing self-contempt that will without ceasing torture its victim as long as memory lives. It is the densest ignorance which leads one to believe that any vicarious sacrifice can purchase salvation from the penalties imposed by the only judge who is always just and never merciful — one's own self. And the man who is so impassive that he cannot feel these pains (if there really is such a man) is so dead already that an executioner could

take nothing from him. Thus his punishment began before his crime in his inability to experience happiness as well as pain; and this inability is the result of ignorance.

If, after one has learned these things, one deliberately puts one's hand into a fire or treads on a banana peel, it is because one's own ignorance or selfishness, or the ignorance or selfishness of other persons, has put a fire or a banana peel where it should not be, or has created conditions which make it necessary to ignore its presence.

Thus, all causes of pain can be reduced to ignorance or selfishness; and when we come to examine the latter we shall find that there is a kind of beneficent selfishness which is not a cause of pain, and that the selfishness which is a cause of pain, is itself the result of ignorance.

Before a child learns that through its own selfishness it deprives itself of all the pleasures arising from the exercise of the altruistic instincts, it wants everything, and wants it

wholly for itself. When it learns that there is a higher pleasure in the exercise of sympathy and generosity than there is in monopoly, it becomes less selfish. It would no longer kill its baby sister to get the sister's rattle. When it grows into a youth and has learned still more of the pains of selfishness, and of the pleasures of generosity, the youth would not even kill his playfellows to gratify his selfishness. When he grows into a man, he may forget what he has already learned; but if he learns more of the penalties of selfishness, he will avoid, as far as existing conditions permit him to avoid, injuring any member of his family or of his circle of intimate friends. The diminution of his harmful selfishness is thus brought about solely by an increase of knowledge. Selfishness itself is thus brought under the causality of ignorance, which therefore appears to be the primary and natural cause of all pain.

If ignorance is the natural cause of pain, as heat is the cause of evaporation, we cannot

expect a natural divinity to remove the pain till the cause has been removed; and the only natural method of curing ignorance is through the acquisition of knowledge.

But can one pretend to believe that there has not been a prodigious acquisition of knowledge by man? It is true that there is much learning in the world, and there appears to be plenty of intelligence. People can solve the most intricate problems of mathematics, learn any number of languages, unravel the most complicated questions of logic, create the most wonderful inventions, and settle the most recondite questions of science and philosophy. Can these wonderful beings justly be said to be ignorant?

No, they are not ignorant of these things; but a banker who knows the current value of ten thousand different kinds of securities, may still not know that a burglar is drilling a hole in his safe. So far he is ignorant, and it would not offend him to tell him so if he is a truly wise and learned man. In the

acquisition of all this learning, we may have overlooked some facts that might have enabled us to make a happier use of it.

But is it not a fact that the advance of the human race in knowledge and intelligence has been accompanied by an actual increase of pain?

Perhaps it has been. Some people say it has been; and yet, childhood is, in many cases, the most unhappy period of life, solely on account of its terrifying ignorance. But even if the popular belief is admitted to be true, this by no means implies that advance in intelligence has always been accompanied by increase of pain, nor that man's advance in knowledge has caused the increase of his pain, nor that a further advance in knowledge would not reveal the source of his pain and the means of relieving it.

Among the inferior creatures advance in intelligence does not seem to have been accompanied by increase of pain. On the contrary, progress seems to have been ac-

companied by a relative increase of happiness, for a monkey certainly looks happier than an oyster; and as we cannot communicate with either animal, we must be guided by appearances in both cases. Among such creatures an almost wholly selfish struggle is one of the chief means of advancement; but while these creatures are not sufficiently intelligent to invent any other means of advancement, they are not sufficiently enlightened to appreciate or suffer those pains which hostile competition causes among civilized beings. Their ignorance is so profound that these pains do not in any great measure exist for them. Being ignorant of the pains of selfishness, they remain ignorant of the means of avoiding them; but such pains as they are capable of appreciating they either learn to avoid or quickly succumb to without much suffering.

Thus intelligence continued to advance, apparently without any relative increase of pain, till man was evolved; and he has now advanced so far that he has become capable

of acutely appreciating the pains of selfishness, without having advanced far enough to fully recognize the cause of his pain, and certainly without having advanced far enough to perceive clearly that the cause is removable. Still less clearly does he understand how to remove it.

Man has learned to recognize selfishness as a means of progress, and he has become so accustomed to the kind of selfishness by means of which he has progressed that he believes progress would be impossible without it. He knows that the increase of intelligence wrought by selfish competition enables him to escape all the pains that he now knows how to escape, but he does not yet realize that the selfishness of his competition is the chief proximate cause of all the pain that remains. His intelligence is not the cause, but the condition of his pain.

Now, the question arises: Will man ever acquire that intelligence which will enable

him to escape from his selfishness and thus escape from pain?

He has already acquired it, but it is still in a nebulous form. He has the knowledge, as a slumberer who is not fully enough awake to cover himself has the knowledge, that the bedclothes have slipped off. Man hopes, in an indistinct way, that the race will in some future age be released from its pain, but he does not know how the release will be accomplished, nor why he hopes. He hopes, as a dreamer hopes, that he will grow warm, without realizing that he must awake and relieve his own discomfort if it is ever to be relieved at all. He has dreamed his dream of pain so long that he thinks he must always dream; and when his slumber is so far disturbed that he partially wakes, and, through the phantasms of his dream, faintly sees the fleeting vision of the truth that would release him, he mutters uneasily in his slumber and grumbles that his painful sleep has been disturbed. The vision fades away, or, if it stays, its out-

line quickly blends with the distorted products of his dreaming fancy, and so, while the dream is altered, it still goes on.

We all comprise this slumbering intelligence. Each one of us carries about with him a little fragment of undissolved mind with which he does such thinking as he does at all. The rest of our mentality is merged in the common mind that dreams, and when we lose our grip on the piece of mind that we try to keep, our mentality is wholly merged in the common mind, and we become automatons. No one can boast that his thinking is in any great degree his own, that it is not largely the suggested thinking of a dreaming race. But one may, for a brief moment, so far awake as to see that in this dreaming mind there is a vast ocean of intelligence that might dream a more reasonable dream if its individual drops could occasionally segregate themselves and think their own unbiased thoughts.

They cannot do this now, but they would learn to do it if every man would take an

hour now and then to try to think the jagged truth about anything his piece of mind can think about at all; and if destiny may be supposed to concern itself with so small a matter as a lonely man's reflections, this is the goal to which destiny has guided these reflections.

Our thinking might at first be mostly wrong, as mine has doubtless been, but that this method would at last lead to true thinking, there is no doubt. Thus we might learn the meaning of the Golden Rule, which we shall hardly learn in any other way; and till we learn to think so clearly about all things that we can see the word Confucius and the Galilean have spelled in their two versions of the Golden Rule, and strip that word of all the grotesque meanings that the dreaming fancy of a slumbering race has woven into it, we shall not escape from pain, and the heart of man will not be satisfied. It is not a heart man needs; he has that now. He needs a wakened mind to teach him how to use it.

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The rushing wind drives the sleet against the window and reminds the Lonely Man of his surroundings. The hour is late, his pipe has long since grown cold, and the fire, blinking its bright eyes in the asbestos grate, seems to whisper in its saucy voice, "Who cares for you or your reflections? Is not a pound of matter worth a ton of thought? Give the world something which it can ride in, or talk through, or laugh at, and you will be accounted great. Material things are the things that endure. I am still here. You can see me and feel me; but where are all your fine-spun thoughts now? Can any man see them with his eyes or feel them with his hands? The city is sleeping in happy oblivion of you and your thoughts. It will sleep so to-morrow night and the night after. Aye, it and the world will lull themselves to sleep every night for many centuries with the sweet conviction that things are as they should be and that wise men will leave them so.

"What matters it that individual thinking

might bring the millennium a few centuries sooner than it will otherwise come? Has not your friend Confucius said, 'Thought without learning is perilous'? The Millennium will come of itself — if it come at all. What matters it, then, that Confucius also said, 'Learning undigested by thought is labor lost'?"

But the Lonely Man perceives that the voice of the fire is the voice of a false witness and an unwise counsellor, and that the blinking eyes of the fire are the eyes of a vain coquette who would entice him into forgetfulness of serious matters for the gratification of her own vanity. For he knows that others besides himself are thinking tonight — many others — hundreds of thousands of them. Perhaps they are not thinking as he has thought. Perhaps they are thinking more wisely and perhaps less wisely. But they are thinking their own thoughts, at least, and no man or number of men can stop their thinking. It will go on till the

thousands become millions, and the thoughts become more and more nearly true; and then things will become more nearly as they should be.

As for him, he has had his reflections. For once he has been as wide awake as it is possible for him to be; and now, when his brief season of exile is over, he will return to his little crowd and melt lovingly into it, and then, perhaps, he will think as it thinks. It is so easy to persuade ourselves that in thinking, as in dressing, he was right who said,

"Though wrong the mode, comply; more sense is shown
In wearing others' follies than our own."

And yet, if he should ever again so far awake as to think at all, he will still believe that it is well to think one's own thoughts occasionally even though they be wrong.

THE END

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